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HENRY SMEATON:

A JACOBITE STORY

OF

THE REIGN OF GEORGE THE FIRST.

BY

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HENRY SMEATON.

CHAPTER I.

SLEEP was not destined that night to visit the eyes of the young Earl of Eskdale. He made his way through the passages to the stone door near the well—opened it cautiously, and looked around. Nobody was to be seen ; and the sounds which had alarmed them above had ceased. Closing the door and locking it, he hastened back to the cottage of Grayling, seated himself with the old man, who

was still up by the fire, and inquired whether he had heard any noise. But the sounds had not reached the hamlet ; and, after waiting half an hour, the old man went out to seek intelligence. When he returned, he brought the servant, Thomas Higham, with him, whose explanation was so far satisfactory, that it showed Smeaton, or, at least, led him to believe, that no fresh peril was to be apprehended for the time. The high words which had been heard by the lover and his fair bride, had passed between the servant and a messenger from Exeter, and were provoked by Higham himself, in order to give early intimation to his master that the household was likely soon to be disturbed.

“ You see, my Lord,” he said, “ the truth is, Sir John rode a great part of the way to Exeter this morning, having been summoned thither, I dare say, upon your affairs. But he would not go the whole way, because he had required that assurance should be given him on the road, that

his house should not be taken possession of during his absence ; and no messenger met him. The fellow says he was detained, and could not come on till to-night. I dare say, he got drunk and forgot all about it ; but I picked a quarrel with him in order to let you hear."

"Then it was merely the messenger with whom you were speaking ?" said Smeaton. "Do you know what reply he brought to Sir John ?"

"Oh, yes !" answered Higham. "I got that out of him in his passion. He said we were all insolent alike, Sir John and his servants,(one of whom he took me to be) ; and that the magistrates at Exeter would give no such assurances to anybody, till Sir John had explained his conduct."

"Is he gone ?" demanded his master.

"Oh, yes, my Lord," replied Higham. "I kept hiding in the wood till I heard him trotting back again ; and then I was just

coming hither, when I met old Stockfish here."

"Then I will ride over at once to Keanton," said Smeaton, "if you can get me your horse out of the stable."

"Why, it is only the pack-horse, my Lord," replied Higham; "and though it is as strong as a lion, it is as slow as a bear."

"It matters not," replied his master. "It would take too long to get either of the others from the farm. Bring it down to the end of the hamlet as speedily as possible, and then remain here till I come back, in order that they may think you are riding it yourself."

The man sped away; the horse was soon brought; and, about two in the morning, Smeaton was on his road towards Keanton. On his arrival, he found that, though most persons in the little village were asleep, two or three of the principal farmers were congregated at the house of Thompson, waiting for his arrival. He

was received with every sort of respect ; but, nevertheless, there was a somewhat gloomy and dissatisfied look about the men, which gave him some key to their feelings. They said that the message they had received in his name had so completely misled them, that every preparation had been made for taking up arms, and without much secrecy or disguise.

“ If we stand hesitating, my Lord,” said one of the men, boldly, “ the people of Exeter, who have had spies amongst us, won’t fail to be down upon us when we least expect them ; and then we shall be marched away to prison. Nobody doubted, my Lord, that the order came from you ; for the only thing that surprised us was, that you had not given it long before. We are, every one of us, willing to shed our blood for our right King, under the command of your Lordship, whose good father was ever ready to draw the sword in a just cause ; but we should not like to spend the rest of our lives in jail without striking a blow, right or wrong.”

Smeaton was a good deal mortified, for there was but little time to give long explanations as to his motives, or to show the worthy men around him how hopeless was the course they were inclined to pursue. He told them, however, briefly but clearly, that he credited in no degree the assertion, so frequently made by the Jacobite party, that the majority of the people of England were anxious for the return of the Stuarts. He had convinced himself, he said, that such was not the case ; and he added, what seemed to surprise them very much, that he thought the people of any country had a right to some voice in the disposal of the crown. It must be remembered that the divine right of kings had at that period been rarely questioned ; that where, as in the case of England, it had not only been questioned but set aside, the new doctrine of the people's rights had only made way with one party ; and that that party had shown themselves so far doubtful of their own position as to choose

for their sovereign a member of the same family whose head they had repudiated. The men to whom Smeaton spoke had been bred up under his ancestors, with the notion of this divine right inculcated upon them from infancy, almost as a part of their religion ; and it is not, therefore, to be wondered at that they marvelled exceedingly to hear their young lord pronounce doctrines which to them seemed little less than treasonable. They could comprehend his arguments much better, however, when he went on to explain to them that the chances of an insurrection even in the north of Great Britain being successful, were exceedingly small at that time ; and that no chance whatever existed of a rising in the west of England prospering for above a day. He showed them that, from the information they themselves possessed, it was clear that all the principal leaders of the Jacobite party in Devonshire and Somersetshire had been secured, by orders of the government ; and that no force could

be raised sufficient to resist the troops which were ready to act against the Pretender.

"Yes, my lord," replied the farmer who had before spoken ; "but we might make our way across the country, to help our friends in the north ; and that *I* shall do, for one, now I have made up my mind."

The man spoke in a dogged and determined tone ; and several others who were present, though they said little, seemed much inclined to follow his example. The time thus ran on for about an hour in fruitless discussion ; and then it became necessary for the young nobleman to return to his place of refuge. He could, therefore, only entreat those by whom he was surrounded, to pause and consider well before they acted upon a resolution which might hurry them into dangers they had not yet fully calculated.

With this advice, he left them ; and, according to custom on such occasions, his conduct became the subject of much comment. Some blamed him as a

waverer ; some of the more rash affected to doubt his courage ; and others marvelled at what could possess him ; when some one, in a jocular manner, alluded to the pretty lady at Ale Manor as the probable cause of their lord's hesitation and reluctance. As usual, when any likely solution of a difficult question is suggested, every one seized on the idea thus started ; poor Emmeline was looked upon as a sort of Cleopatra who kept their Marc Antony in the toils of love ; and the good farmers set themselves seriously to consider whether no means existed of forcibly withdrawing their young lord from this entanglement.

In the meanwhile, Smeaton rode back towards Ale ; but, as always happens when speed is required, more than one impediment came in his way. It was still blowing hard, although the gale was somewhat more moderate ; and the young nobleman's horse laboured and panted up the hills as if his lungs were unsound. This, however, would only have produced a delay of about

a quarter of an hour ; but a much more serious obstacle soon presented itself. The beast cast a shoe ; no means of replacing it were near at hand ; and it was impossible to proceed with anything like speed.

Embarrassed and annoyed, the young nobleman nevertheless pursued his way, though day dawned and the sun rose when he was fully six miles from the village of Ale. Two courses were before him ; either to ride on boldly and risk a meeting with those whom he wished to avoid, or to hide in some of the hollows of the hills till night fell, taking his chance of obtaining food from the shepherds or herdsmen who fed their cattle on the downs. But a feeling of recklessness had come over him, proceeding not alone from the conversation which had just passed, but also from a perception of the manifold dangers of his position and of the difficult situation in which he was placed ; and he had determined to go forward at all hazards, when he perceived some one

on foot, apparently watching him from the summit of one of the neighbouring hills. As soon as the man got sight of Smeaton riding below, he ran down towards him as fast as possible ; and the young Earl conjectured that there was an intention of cutting him off on the road towards Ale.

“ I can deal with one at least,” he thought, and pushed on somewhat more rapidly, although his horse now went very lamely.

But the person on the hill ran fast, and cut him off at a turning in the path he was pursuing, when, to Smeaton’s surprise, he beheld the face and figure of his servant, Higham, who, holding up his hand to prevent his farther advance, besought him not to ride on, on any account.

“ You cannot get to the village, my Lord, but by passing round the Manor house ; and it is in possession of the soldiers from Exeter. They have taken Sir John out of his bed this morning, and intend to carry him away to Exeter, a prisoner. He talks

very high, but looks low ; and so I thought I might as well run on to tell you, and keep myself out of harm's way."

" Sir John Newark !" exclaimed Smeaton, in utter amazement ; for the character of the knight was in no degree a secret to him, notwithstanding all the pains taken to conceal his real views and objects. " Are you sure, Higham, that *I* am not the real object of the search, and that Sir John is not arrested either from his having hidden me in his house so long, or as a sort of security for my discovery ?"

" Lord bless you, no, my Lord !" replied Higham. " Sir John Newark is lagged for Sir John Newark's own doings. He has played fast and loose with every government for many a long year, and has won a precious deal by the game—at least, so the people here say. He has made people in London fancy he is much more powerful in Devonshire than he is ; and so, whenever he wanted anything, he made a show of going over to the other party, and got

what he required. Now, if he wanted Keanton, for instance, and thought that the Whigs were likely to win the day, he would become very high church indeed, and pretend to be plotting with your Lordship just to be bribed to give it up and betray you. But such a man is caught out in the end. He cannot carry on such a game without making some mistake ; and the magistrates here are desperate sharp. I was in the house when the soldiers came ; and it oozed out amongst them that Sir John was charged upon some letter found on a messenger, in which he had gone a little too far. As to seeking for your Lordship, they never asked for you at all ; and, though they got possession of the house quietly enough, they knew better than to go into the village to make any search. They would have been thrashed out soon enough. All they wanted was Sir John ; and him they have caught and put in a bag. But nevertheless, I think it would be better for you to

keep out of the way till the men are gone and have taken their prisoner with them ; for there is a great chance, if they found you, that they would bag you too. As soon as they are gone, you have got the game in your own hands ; for there will be nobody at Ale to stop your doing what you like ; and I can go and watch from the top of Ale Head to see when they pass up the road."

The words of Higham were like the voice of Hope, promising bright things which might, or might not, be performed ; but if a doubt previously existed in the mind of Smeaton, as to whether he should or should not go forward, it was at once removed. To try to make his way into Ale, so long as the soldiery were at the Manor House, would have been madness ; and, consequently, choosing his course at once, he determined to retreat a little way into the hollows, and to send the man up to the high ground above Ale Head, whence a

considerable portion of the road, the soldiers were obliged to travel, was visible. He accordingly sought out a spot whence he could keep his eye upon his servant, whilst Higham watched the road, and arranged with his master a sort of code of signals for the purpose of communicating what his observations discovered from the height, without obliging the Earl to descend. But the man had not been more than ten minutes at the highest point of the coast when, by stretching out his right arm in the same direction as the road to Exeter, he indicated that the guard and their prisoner had set out.

Waiting a few minutes, to give time for their passing out of sight, the young nobleman moved his horse slowly forward, choosing the soft turf to ride over as the best for his horse's unshod feet ; but, the moment he altered his position, Higham ran down again to meet him, and informed him that it would be better to wait a little ; for, though the greater number of the soldiers

were out of sight, yet two were far in the rear of the rest, and might recall the others in a moment.

“Sir John is determined to take it at his ease,” added the man ; “for he has got his great coach and six horses, with a servant on horseback at each wheel. It looks, for all the world, like the Lord Mayor’s coach, and goes as slow ; but, at all events, it will serve his purpose, and both make him comfortable in the inside, and delay the people who have him in custody.”

“Then, do you think he meditates escape ?” asked the young Earl.

“That is as it may be, my Lord,” replied Higham. “If he hopes for any one to help him, he is quite mistaken ; for the fishermen would not stir a finger for him ; and the peasantry do not like him much better, as far as I can hear. He is a sorry fellow, and a proud one, and won’t find many friends in the world ; but, perhaps, he thinks to get off by some trick ; and then,

if he does join the prince's army, he will have taken the first strong resolution he ever did in his life—but he won't do that. He will hold fast by the ruling power in the end, depend upon it ; for Sir John is his own sovereign, and nobody is so despotic with him as his own interest."

Smeaton mused awhile, and then moved slowly forward again, sending his servant a little in advance to see that the country was clear. No obstacle, however, presented itself. The cavalcade was out of sight ; the grounds round Ale Manor were perfectly solitary ; and not even a herd or a labourer was to be seen. Dismounting from his horse, where the road to the Manor House turned into the wood, the young Earl descended on foot to the village, from which a sound of loud talking came up the side of the hill. He found the greater part of the people of the place—men, women, and even children—assembled in one of the little gardens which, fenced with large, flat stones, lay here and there

between the cottages. All seemed in a state of great excitement; but it was evidently not excitement of an angry character; for some laughed, while others talked loud, though in no very sad tone.

As soon as Smeaton was seen advancing, by those on the outside of the little crowd, one stout fellow waved his hat and cried, "Hurrah!" and congratulations poured thick upon him as he advanced amongst them.

"Ay, my Lord, we were in a bit of a fright about you," said old Grayling, grasping his hand unceremoniously in his great, broad, hard fist; "but not much either; for we sent out people to see that they did not get hold of you."

"Perhaps, he does not know that the soldiers have been here, uncle," said the younger Grayling.

"No, not here, Dick, not here," said the stout, old man. "They dared not put their noses in here. if they had been five times their number. Up at the house, they might

do what they liked. That was no business of ours. But they are gone now, and have a long march to Exeter. So that all is safe for a day or two."

"Then I suppose I can safely go up to the house," said the young nobleman. "I wish to hear the particulars of all this business."

"Ay, safe enough," replied the old man, with a meaning laugh; "safer, I fancy, than when you lived there quite at your ease, my lord. A bad friend is worse than a bad enemy."

"But won't you have something to eat, sir?" inquired Dame Grayling. "I'll get you something in a minute."

Smeaton, however, declined, and turned his steps by the shortest path towards the house, thinking, with joy, it must be acknowledged, of the removal of many obstacles in his way by the arrest of Sir John Newark. Bitterly was he destined to be disappointed, as is often the case when we suffer our hopes to be elated without a full

knowledge of the circumstances. He found everything quiet and tranquil about the house, though he could hear some of the servants, as he approached, talking together in the stable-court ; and his eye ran over the windows, to see if Emmeline was at any of them. Nobody, however, was visible, and he lifted the latch great of the door, to go in as usual. But the door was locked ; and he had to ring the bell and wait several minutes before he gained admission. The servant, who appeared at length, was one of the younger men ; and, putting on a rueful aspect, with perhaps a touch of hypocrisy, he was proceeding to inform the young nobleman of the sad event which had occurred, when Mrs. Culpepper herself glided into the hall, saying, with a low curtsey—

“ If you will walk into the saloon, my lord, I will tell you all about it.”

Smeaton followed her, with some anxiety, for there was an ominous gloom upon her face, which he did not think the mere

arrest of Sir John Newark was likely to produce.

“ You have heard what has happened ? ” she said, immediately the door was closed.

“ That Sir John Newark has been made prisoner, and sent to Exeter,” replied Smeaton.

“ To London—to London,” returned Mrs. Culpepper. “ He will not even be examined at Exeter, they say, but be sent off to Newgate or the Tower at once. He has long been playing double with them, and now they have found, upon a courier, a letter of his to the Earl of Mar, which, by the explanations of the messenger, they make out to be full of treason.—But that is not the worst of it, Henry—that is not the worst of it. He has taken the Lady Emmeline with him, whether she would or not. We knew not what to do—whether boldly to tell of her marriage, or still to keep it secret. To say that she was married to you would have been to

make matters worse ; and now, I will own, I am at my wits' end."

This was a terrible blow to Smeaton ; one, indeed, on which he had never calculated ; and difficulties presented themselves in all ways. If he lingered in that part of the country till tidings were obtained from London, he was sure to be taken, and probably kept a prisoner at Exeter ; while, on the other hand, the intelligence he had received from the fishermen had shown him that every road between Devonshire and the capital was strictly watched and guarded ; so that it was next to impossible for him to pass in that direction without discovery. Still, however, his mind was turned towards making the attempt at least ; and the only consideration was, how to do so in safety. He could devise no means ; but good Mrs. Culpepper came to his aid with a plan which seemed feasible.

" To try and get over the whole distance by land," she said, " is hopeless ; but the boatmen will easily take you round, and

land you on some quiet part of the coast near Abbotsbury or Weymouth, whence you can easily get to London under another name ; and I don't know that London is not as good a hiding-place as any in the land."

Smeaton's inclinations led him that way. Hope, too, unextinguishable Hope, was busy in his breast, telling him that in the capital much could be done which he would vainly attempt to do by letter. He would see Lord Stair, he thought ; he would cast himself upon his honour, upon his generosity. He would explain his own conduct, and recall to that nobleman the assurances he had given him not long before. Then, when freed from the perils which now surrounded him, he could, with safety to her and to himself, claim his beautiful bride, and set at defiance the arts of open enemies or pretended friends.

" I will set out at once," he said, after having given a few minutes to thought. " Yours is the best plan, my dear Nanny ;

and I will lose no time in executing it. I have at least one good friend in London, who has the will and the power to see justice done me."

"Pray take some refreshment before you go," said the housekeeper, in the tone of old affection. "You have turned pale with all these bad news, and look harassed and grieved."

"Well indeed may I, Nanny," replied the young Earl, laying his hand kindly on her arm. "Were there nothing else, surely the loss of my dear Emmeline, within ten short hours after she became mine, is enough both to grieve and agitate me. But I need no refreshment, and shall not be content till I am on my way."

"Nay, but stay a little," said the old housekeeper. "I can send down and order the boat directly, while you take some food; and besides, Richard, I am sure, will be glad to go with you as soon as he comes back."

"Has he not gone with his father?" exclaimed Smeaton, in great surprise.

"Oh, no, my lord," replied the house-keeper. "He was not here at the time. He has not been in the house since five o'clock this morning, when he rode away on one of his wild expeditions. We all thought he had gone to seek you at Keanton."

"I did not meet with him," said Smeaton; "but doubtless he will be glad to follow his father; and, though his presence may be some embarrassment to me, yet, poor boy, it is well that he should go with me."

"Better tell him all, my lord," observed Mrs. Culpepper. "You may trust his word if he promises secrecy; for, though a little twisted by one thing or another, God gave him good wits at the first, and a good heart too.—Hark! That must be his horse. Yes, he is calling for a groom. He must have heard what has happened; for that is not his usual way of speaking.

Stay :—I will get you both some food and wine. He will want it as much as you."

She had hardly left the room when Richard Newark entered it : his manner of speech and bearing were wholly, almost miraculously, changed, as, with a heated face and eyes full of wild light, he exclaimed, " Ah, you have heard the tidings, Eskdale ! They have taken away my father, which was what I always expected, and Emmeline too, which I did *not* expect ; for she meddled with nothing, and he meddled with everything.—Now, what do you intend to do ? I know what *I* intend to do, if the chain and collar will let me."

" I propose," replied Smeaton, " to take boat at once, land somewhere near Weymouth where we are not known, and thence make our journey to London under fictitious names. I take it for granted that you are anxious to follow your father ; and, if you like to accompany me, I shall be glad, although there is no need of your doing so ; for doubtless you would be permitted to

pass unquestioned. As for me, the plan I propose offers the only chance of my being able to reach the capital except as a prisoner. But you must decide at once, Richard."

"What do you want in the capital?" asked Richard Newark. "What have you to do in that great ugly mixture of dirt, brick houses, and coal smoke?"

"I have much business, and important business, there," answered Smeaton. "Lord Stair pledged his word to me that I should remain safe and unquestioned in this country for a time, if I meddled in no degree with politics. I have not done so; and yet you know how I have been treated."

Richard Newark laughed, and shook his head with a thoughtful and abstracted air. "I must not say what I would fain say," he remarked—"no, no, I must not. It is very odd that one's fate is so often managed for one! You have been played upon, Smeaton."

"At all events," replied Smeaton, "I

have written two letters to Lord Stair, to neither of which I have received an answer. He is a man of honour and a gentleman, who will not deny his plighted word ; and I must go to London to claim its fulfilment."

" There are two reasons why you must not," said Richard, " and good ones too, whatever you may think. First, you can't; and secondly, there would be no good in going if you could.—Listen to me, listen to me. A ship of war is lying off the mouth of the bay, sent down, as I learn, to watch the coast and search every boat. That is for the ' can't.' Now for the ' good of going.' Lord Stair is not in London. He is in command of the troops in Scotland ; and, if you want him, noble Lord, you must go north." Then, opening the door, he shouted, " Where is the Flying Post ? Where is the Flying Post that came yesterday ?—It was in this room last night."

In answer to his call, a servant brought him one of the newspapers of the day,

where, amongst other brief and uncommitted announcements, appeared a paragraph, stating that the Earl of Stair had set out on the morning preceding to take command of the troops in Scotland, and keep the rebels in check till a larger army could be assembled to chastise them.

Smeaton looked at the date of the paper, which, as it had come by an express courier, was very recent.

"If I set out at once," he said, "I may, by hard riding, catch him in Yorkshire or Northumberland. It states here that he will be in York on Monday next—somewhat slow travelling in a business of such importance; but doubtless he has reinforcements with him. I will get my horses in, and ride off at once."

"I will be one with you," added Richard Newark; "for I am travelling north, too."

"Will you not go to join your father?" asked the young Earl, in much surprise.

"Not I," replied the lad. "I could

give him no help ; and he would not have it if I could. My father is quite sufficient for himself, noble Lord—at least, he thinks so ; and he never thanks any one for meddling with his affairs, though he meddles with other people's often enough, whether they thank him or not.—But now let us get ready. I do not know whether these people have carried off your baggage or not Mine will be soon trussed. Heaven send me occasion to use the sword you gave me ! But you had better go to Keanton first, and take people enough to force the way, in case Hanover and Pulteney should try to stop you. If you don't go there, your people, I can tell you, will set out by themselves, and perhaps do more than you like or think of. I was there half an hour after you this morning ; and how I missed you I do not know.”

For a minute or two, Smeaton did not reply, but remained in deep thought.

“ So be it,” he said at length. “ Come down, Richard, and join me at the end

of the village as soon as you are ready. I must send for my horses, and, in the mean time, will bid my servant pack up the baggage which was left here."

"Be sure first that it has not been taken away," observed the lad.

"I trust it has not been," answered Smeaton; "for my stock of money is running low; and there are some jewels and other things of value in those large trunks, which are worth money at all events."

"Oh, the people at Keanton will furnish you with money, I am sure," said Richard, "if you will lead them where they like."

"That is what I am least inclined to do, I fear," returned Smeaton. "Therefore I will go up and see, that I may be under obligations to no one."

He found his baggage where he had left it, returned to the saloon, partook of some of the refreshments which Mrs. Culpepper had provided, and then hastened away to make his arrangements in the

village. More than once during his conversation with Richard Newark, it had struck him that a strange transformation had come over the lad's manner. His tone was decided and quick, and his look grave, perhaps sad, even when he laughed. But Smeaton had too many things to think of, to comment at length, even in his own mind, on this alteration ; and the impression was swept away as soon as made.

The hurry and confusion of a rapid departure had many additions in Smeaton's case. What was to be done with good Van Noost, was not the least consideration. When notice of the approach of troops towards Ale Manor had been first received in the village, the statuary instantly hid himself, no one knew where ; but now he had re-appeared upon the scene ; and the young nobleman could not bear the thought of leaving him behind for the consequences of his own indiscretion. The appearance of a ship before Ale Harbour, which had thrown the whole

village into a state of commotion, prevented the possibility of Van Noost's escape by sea, and rendered the necessity the greater of all suspected persons hastening their departure without delay. The fishermen anticipated that the ship's boats would enter the harbour every moment ; and they seemed to regard the landing of a number of seamen with much greater apprehension than an attack by a party of soldiers. They showed no inclination to abandon their friends, however ; but at the same time eagerly assisted in all preparations which were necessary to put them beyond the reach of this new danger.

The horses were brought to the village with great rapidity ; the baggage was packed and loaded without delay ; and, as Van Noost's fat pony was lost to his affectionate master for ever, a stout farmer's nag was procured for him, on whose broad back the little round man was placed like a plum-pudding on a trencher. Still, the man who had been set to watch

on the beach of the bay, and at the top of Ale Head, brought no intelligence of any movement on board the ship to create alarm ; and all was quiet when the party of fugitives, consisting of Smeaton and Richard Newark, with Van Noost and two servants, rode away towards Keanton, where they arrived without interruption. There, for a time, I must leave them, to take up their history at an after period.

CHAPTER II.

CONSIDERING the period of the year, which was only the end of September, the day was cold and wintry, when a party, consisting of some sixteen horse, took their way through one of the remote districts of Northumberland. The sky was covered with a film of grey cloud ; and the wind, keen and chilling, as if loaded with hail or snow, swept over the bleak hills and moors.

Northumberland was, at that time, from many local causes, far behind the rest of England in point of cultivation and

numbers. Remote from the capital either of England or Scotland, and holding but very scanty communication with the rest of Europe, the power and authority of government was less felt and acknowledged in the great northern county than elsewhere ; old thoughts and habits clung to the inhabitants with greater tenacity ; news circulated less freely, and men were more under the influence of the great proprietors, than perhaps in any other English shire. The party of horse, therefore, which I have mentioned, and which was headed, as the reader may suppose, by the young Earl of Eskdale and Richard Newark, not only passed unquestioned through a district where a great majority of the people were attached to the Stuart cause, but were received in the small towns and villages with much cordiality, as soon as it was perceived that they were not soldiers of the House of Hanover. The Northumberland man has a certain degree of northern cautiousness

about him ; but he is by no means without the merry English spirit, and a good portion of wit. Few inquiries were made of the travellers as to the end and object of their journey ; but a sly and jesting allusion was often ventured to the cause of the exiled king ; and every information was given voluntarily regarding the insurrectionary movements in Scotland, and the general feelings of the people of the county itself.

The report, which had reached the west, of Forster and others being in arms in Northumberland, proved to have been greatly premature ; and Smeaton now found that nothing was certain as to the proceedings of the malcontents and the government, except that warrants were out for the arrest of the Earl of Derwentwater, and Forster of Bamborough, member for the county, together with several other persons of less note ; and that the Earl and his companion, with several of their friends, were closely concealed.

The situation of the young Earl of Eskdale was peculiar ; but his being placed in it had been brought about by circumstances which affected many at that period, and led them unwillingly to actions which they did not at first contemplate, and into a position which they had anxiously striven to avoid. A hundred instances of noblemen and gentlemen could be cited, who were led on, little by little, from a mere abstract feeling of loyalty and attachment towards the exiled house of Stuart, to a complete and sometimes furious enthusiasm in their cause, to an active part in insurrection, and to their own utter destruction. Such was not altogether the case with Smeaton ; but it must be acknowledged that, before he reached Northumberland, his feelings and views were very greatly altered. The zeal and eagerness of all those by whom he was surrounded, of course had their effect.

Few men—perhaps no young man—can prevent himself from being altogether in-

fected by the enthusiasm of others, especially if no antidote be at hand ; and certain it is that the young nobleman was inclined to look more favourably upon the conduct of the exiled princes, to make more allowance for their faults, and to regard their cause more hopefully, than he had been when we first saw him in London. Moreover, the treatment which he had received in Devonshire, the evident determination of the local authorities, if not of the government, to molest and persecute him, notwithstanding the strong assurances he had received from Lord Stair, and the contemptuous silence with which, as it appeared, that nobleman had treated his letters, irritated him greatly against the House of Hanover. It was certain, he thought, that one at least of those letters must have reached the hands for which both were intended, although the second, perhaps, might not have arrived in London before the Earl had taken his departure from the capital. Why had

he neglected to reply ? Was he inclined to violate his plighted word, or to connive at its violation by others ? Or had he suffered his mind to be warped by false reports ? and if he had, was he justified in so doing before stronger proof was adduced than any which Smeaton imagined could have been furnished by his enemies ?

"I have kept my word to the letter," said the young nobleman, to himself ; "but I cannot bear this much longer. If they will drive me into insurrection, it is not my fault. But I will yet make one more effort for an explanation ; and if that fails, I and they must abide the consequence."

A sigh followed the conclusion of this train of thought ; for a moment's reflection showed him, notwithstanding some new-lighted hopes, where the evil consequences of the course, along which he was being hurried, were most likely to fall. It is true, he had not committed himself in any degree, either with Richard Newark, or with the farmers

and stout yeomen who had accompanied or followed him from Keanton. Although he suffered them to join his party—for he could hardly refuse to do so after they had placed themselves in a dangerous situation on his account—he told them from the first that he had pledged himself to the Earl of Stair to take no part in any of the political movements that were going on, if suffered to remain quietly in England for a short period.

“I have kept my part of the compact,” repeated he, “and I have been treated ill ; but, before I actually violate it, I must learn from the Earl what is the meaning of the conduct pursued towards me. Perhaps, all may be explained on both sides ; and, if so, I will keep my word to the letter, leaving you, my good friends, to follow what course you think fit.”

Some of the men received the announcement rather sullenly ; but others smiled with light-hearted shrewdness, thinking that their young Lord’s scruples would soon be

overcome whence once he found himself in the focus of the insurrection.

During the last day's march, many a wild and exaggerated report had reached the little party, of the progress of the insurgent force under the Earl of Mar, and of risings in various other parts of England. Mar's army was swelled to the number of thirty thousand men, according to these rumours ; he had been joined by all the principal noblemen in Scotland ; the Highland clans were universally flocking to him ; the Lowlanders were rising in every direction ; the town of Perth had been taken by a *coup-de-main* ; and a large magazine of arms and ammunition on the coast of Fife, was said to have fallen into the hands of the insurgents. King James himself was reported to have landed on the western coast with an auxiliary army, commanded by the gallant Duke of Berwick ; and the forces of the House of Hanover were stated to be a mere handful, collected in Stirling and sur-

rounded on every side by the legions of King James. In short, tens were magnified into hundreds, and hundreds into thousands, on the Jacobite side, and every small advantage was reported as a great victory ; while the numbers of the opposite party were diminished in proportion, and the great abilities of those who commanded them overlooked or unknown.

Smeaton himself received these rumours for no more than they were worth ; and, perhaps, did not yield them even sufficient credit. Mar had, it is true, taken possession of Perth ; his forces had certainly greatly increased ; and the Master of Sinclair, one of his officers, had seized a small store of arms at Burntisland. The forces of the government, too, at Stirling, were quite inadequate, in point of numbers, to cope with a regular army, commanded by a man of skill and experience ; but Mar was totally deficient in both these points ; and his army consisted of a mere mob of brave men, with little discipline and small cohe-

sion amongst them. True was it, also, that General Whetham, who remained in command at Stirling till the middle of September, had shown but little ability to encounter the grave and dangerous circumstances in which he was placed ; but on the side of the Jacobites all the advantages of number, zeal, and fiery courage, were more than counterbalanced by the incapacity of the commander, and the insubordination of the troops ; while, on the part of the government, numerous bodies of disciplined soldiers and officers of decision, experience, and courage, were hurrying to the scene of action, and preparing to crush the insurrection which had been already suffered to proceed too far.

Vainly did Smeaton ask for tidings of the Earl of Stair, till, on the day which I have mentioned, a farmer told him, somewhat sullenly, that two regiments of dragoons belonging to the Earl of Stair had passed the border that morning, and that there was an ill-looking fellow at their head, with a number of lackeys

in the rear, whom he doubted not was the Earl himself and his servants. This news seemed sufficient ; and, without delay, he hurried on till nightfall, gaining information of the march of these troops as he proceeded, till, on the best opinion he could form, he judged that they could not be much more than one march in advance. The place where he was obliged to halt could hardly be called a hamlet, but rather a group of small farm-houses gathered together in a rich valley amongst the hills. No inn, no place of public entertainment whatever, was to be found ; but the good farmers of the place not only willingly took in the travellers in separate parties, but seemed almost to expect some such visitation. Nods and hints were not wanting to signify that the cause of their guest's movements was known ; and the worthy Northumbrian, at whose house Smeaton and Richard Newark were lodged, with their two servants, whispered in the ear of the young nobleman, that it would be better for him to keep

quiet where he was, the whole of the next day, as Lord Stair's dragoons were at Wooler, and there was some talk of their halting there to refresh, before they proceeded north.

The news was less unsatisfactory to the young Earl than the farmer imagined ; and his first act was to write a letter to Lord Stair, and to direct his servant to take it early on the following morning. He then returned to the room where he had left Richard Newark, and informed him of what he had done.

The lad laughed.

“ Then, most likely, we shall all soon be in the hands of the Philistines,” he said. “ Your noddle, Eskdale, is doubtless much better than mine ; but I don’t think mine would have concocted a scheme for giving this good lord an opportunity of sending back a party to pick us up, just as if we were something he had dropped on the road. Twenty Tories, and an Earl at their head,

would make a good cast of the net for any Hanover fisherman."

"I have not been so imprudent as you think, Richard," rejoined his friend. "I can be careful for my friends as well as for myself. I have not mentioned to Lord Stair that there is any one with me, and have told him that I shall follow the messenger ten miles on the road to-morrow, to meet the man on his return, and that, if he assures me that I shall be safe to come and go, I would present myself at his headquarters, in order that our conduct may be mutually explained. I will send you intimation by the messenger, if I do not return to join you myself."

"And what am I to do?" asked Richard Newark, with a somewhat gloomy and desponding look. "Here I am, like a boat turned off to sea without sail or oar or compass."

"If you would take my advice, Richard," replied his friend, "it would be exactly what I have given you more than once

before ; namely, to make the best of your way to London, and join your father That advice I give to you, because I think the course of your duty is clear, and because I believe your single arm would be of very little service to the cause you are so anxious to serve, although I have not thought it fit or right to dissuade these good men of Keanton, who are with us, from following the course they have chosen for themselves. But the case is very different with you. You are young and inexperienced, and may, hereafter, bitterly regret the step you are now taking. They are older, know and see the consequences of all they are doing, and are only acting in consonance with principles long entertained. Were I to follow my own inclinations—my habitual prejudices, as I may call them—I should, undoubtedly, lead them on the way they are going ; but still I should give you the same advice as I give now.”

“ Then why do you not follow your own inclinations ? ” asked Richard, sharply.

"I won't believe that you are a man to hesitate at doing anything merely because you think it is dangerous. All these men suppose it is because you have no great hope of success that you will not join the King's army."

"They do me wrong," said Smeaton. "I put before them what I thought a just view of the probabilities, because I would not have them act blindly; but I have used no other means of dissuasion. You ask me why I do not follow my own inclination," he continued, thoughtfully; "and I do not know that I shall be able to make you comprehend the reason."

"Try, try," said Richard Newark. "My skull is thick, I know; but, if you tap at the right place, you will get in."

"It is a very painful situation, Richard," said Smeaton, "when a man's reason, in points of such importance as those which are now agitated in England, takes part against the prejudices in which he has been brought up. My father was happier.

He never entertained a doubt that kings possess their power by divine appointment, or imagined that the people had justly any voice in the choice of their rulers. To this principle he sacrificed all his earthly possessions, and would have sacrificed life itself. Neglect, ill-treatment, duplicity on the part of the princes whom he served, made no difference in his opinions. He lived and died in them ; and, during all my early life, I heard of none other. Ten years ago, I should have thought exactly the same as my father, though I felt more than he did the wrongs that were done him, and the insolent indifference with which he was treated. Although I despised our rightful sovereign as a man, I should have been ready to shed my blood for him as a King. Since that time, I have mingled much with the world, have been out of the atmosphere of such prejudices, have learned to think and reason for myself, and have come to the conclusion that, as kings rule for the benefit of the people, the people have a voice in their selection ;

that, in fact, kings have no rights but what they derive from their subjects. Now, if I could convince myself that the majority of the people of England did really desire King James for their sovereign, or even that parties were equally divided for and against him, I should not hesitate to draw my sword in his cause ; for my prejudices are still strong, though they are weakened. But I am not convinced that such is the case ; and all I have seen hitherto, tends to an opposite conclusion. This is one view of the case ; but there is another, which is even still more powerful with me. I pledged myself to Lord Stair, that I would meddle in no way in this struggle for three months."

"But he has not kept his word with you," cried Richard, vehemently. "You cannot be bound by a compact which he has broken."

"It is that which I am anxious to ascertain," replied his friend ; "and that I

will ascertain to-morrow. If I find he has really violated his word with me, or suffered it to be violated by others, of course I shall hold myself entitled to act as I please. But I can hardly suppose that this is the case ; for I have always believed that his character, as a man of honour, is above suspicion ; and I would not, for life itself, by any rash act of mine, justify him in saying that I took advantage of the unauthorised conduct of those western magistrates to violate my plighted word."

Richard Newark fell into a fit of thought ; but he never long retained any very sombre impressions ; and, after the pause of a moment or two, he broke into a laugh, inquiring—

" Do you not think that our dear Emeline may have something to do with your great discretion ?"

" Nothing," replied Smeaton, thoughtfully, " nothing. I trust and hope, though I do not scruple at once to say, Richard,

that, for her sake, I would do anything that did not affect my honour. Nay, more—”

He paused for an answer ; for he was strongly tempted to tell his young companion how indissolubly his own fate and that of Emmeline were now bound together ; but he hesitated on the very point of uttering the words. Richard was so wild, so rash—there might occur so many events to render the safe keeping of that secret important, and there seemed so many chances of his letting it escape him in one of his thoughtless moods—that a moment’s reflection decided the Earl to be silent on the subject, at least, for the time.

“ Well, what more ?” cried Richard, impatiently.

“ I have tried the question with myself times a dozen,” replied the Earl ; “ and, though I need not tell you I love her dearly, I do not believe that that love has

been suffered to interfere at all in the decision I have come to."

"Well, well," said Richard Newark, shrugging his shoulders, "when we march into London and proclaim King James, you shall have her; and I will give away the bride. A pretty father I shall make! I suppose I must hire a white beard for the occasion.—You act as you like; and I must take my chance, as you will not lead me to draw the sword which you have taught me to use. I will take our King's side, and stay by it. I am sick of seeing people wavering between two parties—my father, from policy, and you, from scruples.—There, I don't mean to offend you, noble friend. I doubt not you are quite right, and that your head was made for something better than being run against a wall, which was evidently Nature's intention when she furnished me with this noddle of mine; but you will own that, having seen all I have seen, I may well say, 'No time-serving for me.' I have heard people tell

that my father has got together a great estate by now running with one party and now with another. It is but right that his son should break it to pieces again by sticking tight to one, be it fortunate or unlucky. And now, I shall go to bed. Don't you dream of Emmeline, or you'll go over to Lord Stair to a certainty."

Thus saying, he rose and left the room ; and Smeaton remained some time longer in thought.

CHAPTER III.

THE morning was bright and beautiful ; the clouds of the preceding day, although they had not passed off entirely, had broken into detached masses, soft, white and buoyant, but low down, moving slowly across the blue sky, and leaving large intervals for the rays of the sun to stream through, and paint the brown moors in all the magic colouring of autumn. A faint aerial mist was seen softening the distant parts of the landscape, as Smeaton rode

slowly over the solitary hills which lay tumbled about in large rounded masses, marking the frontier line of England and Scotland. The alternation of shadow and of gleam brought forth as varied and as beautiful colours as those which paint the dolphin at his death. The free; pure air, the rich, changing prospect, the wide expanse of view, all seemed to breathe hope, if not happiness; and that strange, mysterious sensation, that elevated and expansive feeling, to which I can give no name, but which takes possession of the heart when first we quit the busy haunts of men to plunge into a wide solitude, came strongly upon the young Earl as he strained his sight along the distant hills and valleys. Not a soul was to be seen, not a living creature but a large bird of prey floating slowly in vast circles over his head. It was the early morning.

His servant had gone forward about half an hour before ; the road which they had both to follow had been clearly pointed out;

and Smeaton expected a ride of some twelve or thirteen miles before he could meet the messenger on his return. He gave himself up to thought, but not to that train of thought which perhaps might seem the most natural in his circumstances. He entered into no vain speculations as to the reply he should receive from the Earl of Stair. He suffered not his mind to rest upon the state of parties in the country, or upon the probabilities of the success or failure of the insurrection. He did not even dwell for a moment upon the various rumours of the day before, nor try to free himself, by reason, from any of those impressions—not exactly new but revived—which had been produced in him by the zeal and enthusiasm of all those by whom he had been lately surrounded. His thoughts were of Emmeline, and Emmeline alone. That wonderful thing, association, had called up her image almost as strongly, as distinctly, as if her beautiful face and fair form had been before his

eyes. The brown heath, the rounded hills, the gleams of sunshine, the floating clouds, the free elastic air, all brought back to memory the morning of his ride to the old church at Aleton ; and Emmeline was the principal object in all that remembrance painted.

His thoughts and feelings, however, were his own, and peculiar. I do not believe that there are any two moments in a man's life in which he is exactly the same being, however well the general harmony of the character may be maintained. Years make a difference; months, days, events, circumstances, experience. The changes may be very sudden, or they may be so gradual as to be imperceptible at the time they are taking place; yet, fix any lengthened period, and we find them marked and distinct in the mind as well as in the body. There is as much difference between the sensations of forty and of twenty, as between the face or form of the man and of the boy. Whether for better or for worse, we

change them. They are things of the day, which pass from us and return no more.

Smeaton's love for Emmeline was intense, powerful, enthusiastic ; but it was the love of a man, not of a boy. Ten years before, his thoughts would have been very different when turned towards her ; more agitating, perhaps, but not so deep and strong. He dwelt, as a lover might dwell, on the beautiful memory of her look, the symmetry of her person, the music of her voice, the wild, untutored graces of her mind, the heart-breathing spirit which pervaded everything she said and did ; and the longing to hold her to his bosom again, came upon him very strongly. He thought, too, with pain, of what must be her sensations, what her distress of mind, to be torn from him and carried away against her will, at the very moment when their happiness seemed almost secure ; but it was not with that impulsive rashness which, a few years be-

fore, might have led him to fly to her in spite of obstacles, and without taking means to remove any of the difficulties which beset their path. He was old enough to struggle with his impulses, and generally to overcome them when he felt them to be rash.

Thus, in mingled meditation, he rode on, with sweet and pleasant images presented by memory, and painful reflections chequering the too bright vision.

He had not gone more than eight miles when he saw a man rapidly approaching him, down the slope of the opposite hill. He could hardly believe that his servant had returned so soon ; yet the figure was so much the same—a diminutive man on a tall horse—that, though some distance intervened, he recognized him. They met at the bottom of the valley ; and Smeaton asked eagerly,

“ Well, what news ? Have you brought me a letter ?”

"I have brought your own back again, my Lord," replied Higham, holding it out to his master, as he rode up; "and no other answer could I get."

"No answer!" echoed Smeaton, taking the letter and seeing that it had been opened. "What did he say, or cause to be said to you?"

"Oh, he said very little," replied the man, "and caused nothing to be said at all; for he seemed quite capable of speaking for himself, and that pretty sharply. He broke open the letter, read it through from beginning to end, and then thrust it into my hand, saying,—' You had better ride back again.' I asked if he would not send an answer by me, or if he would send one afterwards. But he said no answer was needed, and called out: 'Take it back to him who sent you. That is the only answer.'"

Smeaton's cheek burned, and his heart beat angrily.

"This is insult," he muttered. "This is insult as well as injury. Some day I may call him to account for it."

"I must say for him, my Lord," added the man, "that it was not a lucky moment to fall upon ; for he was at the head of the men drawn up on the little green, and just ready to march."

"That is no excuse," said Smeaton. "The same number of words, the same amount of breath, the same space of time, would have conveyed an honourable as a dishonourable reply. He might have said that he would write when he was at leisure, that he would see me if I would follow him, and that I might do so in safety. It would have cost no more time." Then, turning round his horse, with his heart all on fire, he asked himself : "Shall I stoop to be a beggar for simple justice ? No, no. The case is very clear. They have made up their mind to drive every one they doubt into insurrection. They say, 'Those

who are not for us are against us.' They have chosen their part with regard to me. It is time that I should choose mine with regard to them."

He had ridden slowly as he went ; but he returned at a gallop, though the rapid motion did not tend to calm his feelings. The farm-house where he had slept was vacant of its guests. Richard Newark, his servant, and all the Keanton men were gone ; but they had left word that, if Smeaton returned and sought them, he would find them at a place called the Waterfalls. The Earl ordered the baggage-horse to be prepared directly, and, in the mean time, applied to the farmer for directions on the way after his party.

" I'll guide you, sir," replied the man. " There is something going on that I have an itching to have a hand in ; and I think I'll pay some of the Newcastle keel-men for throwing me into the Tyne, in one of their brute frolics."

Smeaton gladly accepted his guidance, and, in about half an hour, they set out ; the Earl riding a little in advance, and alone, while the stout farmer jogged on, conversing with the servant, Higham. They took their way through a more cultivated part of the country than that which Smeaton had passed in the morning ; but they soon turned towards the hills again ; and the farmer pointed out a piece of ground on the right, saying :

“ That is Plainfield, my Lord.”

Smeaton, however, was busy with his own thoughts, and made no inquiry, not knowing anything which should make Plainfield remarkable.* A few minutes afterwards, they began to ascend a somewhat steep hill, riding over the green turf ; and, as they wound round it

* It was the place where the Earl of Derwentwater first openly took part in the insurrection.

to lessen the sharpness of the ascent; the young nobleman caught sight of a small party of horse gathered together at the distance of about a mile. "There are our friends, I think," he said.

"Ay, my lord, I dare say they are," replied the farmer.

The words seemed insignificant enough; but they were spoken in a significant tone; and the servant, Tom Higham, gave a low laugh.

A rise in the ground, in another moment, hid the party they had seen; and, spurring quickly on, Smeaton soon came to the top of the height, whence a view of the country could be commanded for several miles. The prospect was very picturesque. The brown hill-side descended somewhat abruptly towards the more even country below, and was channelled by a sort of glen or ravine, through which leaped and tumbled a small mountain stream, fringed here and there with low trees and shrubs,

but ever and anon glancing out under the eye, and catching the sunlight on its foam and spray.

Half way between the top of the hill and the head of this ravine was gathered together a party of men on horseback; not more than, if so many as, very frequently assembled on the most innocent occasions. In ordinary times, one would naturally have supposed that the little meeting consisted of a hunting party, or perhaps two or three dozen of gentlemen assembled to run their greyhounds. Besides those in this central situation, two or three small groups of horsemen were seen coming up from below at different degrees of speed, according to the steepness of the ascent; but still the whole number together might very well have formed a sporting party, only no dogs were to be seen. In the midst of the principal group, Smeaton's eye instantly picked out Richard Newark, who was mounted on a tall and remark-

able white horse ; and, riding quickly down towards him, he was soon by his side. The Keanton farmers, who were there assembled, greeted the approach of their young lord with a sort of half cheer ; and one of them exclaimed aloud—" God bless your lordship ! I thought you would not abandon us in time of need."

" What news from Lord Stair ?" asked Richard, in a whisper.

" None," replied Smeaton, bitterly. " He sent back my letter, opened, but without reply."

" Then I must have been mistaken," said Richard Newark. " I thought that other hands must have been stirring your pottage for you, noble friend. Now, the case is clear enough. Old Hanover won't have you for the giving."

" I never intended to give myself to *him*," replied Smeaton. " Nothing should ever induce me to draw my sword *against* a prince who has been pushed from the

succession to the throne on a false and ridiculous pretence. But, if they will force me to draw the sword *in his favour*, I cannot help it. They must be gratified.—Who are all these ?” And as he spoke, he ran his eye over the rest of the persons present, who, gathered together in various knots, were regarding him with inquiring looks.

“ Oh, you shall soon know them,” returned Richard. “ Common cause makes quick acquaintance.—General Forster, here is my friend, the Earl of Eskdale—Lord Derwentwater, the Earl of Eskdale—Lord Widrington, the Earl of Eskdale.”

“ By my faith, we have more lords than soldiers,” said the latter nobleman, with a laugh, “ and more stout hearts and strong arms than weapons of war. It is to be hoped that supplies will flow in upon us somewhat rapidly.”

“ Come, come, my lord,” said Forster,

"you ought not to be the first to cry out, seeing that you have brought us the fewest men and the scantiest supply."

"Why, I only heard of the business last night," replied Lord Widrington, "and thought this was but a preliminary meeting. Doubtless, we shall have men enough, and weapons enough, too, when once it is known we are in arms."

"Doubtless, doubtless," said the Earl of Derwentwater, a young and handsome man, with a peculiarly prepossessing expression of countenance. "I am glad to see your lordship here," he continued, addressing Smeaton. "Your family have suffered much in the cause we all advocate; and I hope, by the success of our enterprise, you will recover what it lost—a success which, from the news we have just received, seems to be beyond doubt."

"Indeed!" said Smeaton. "May I ask what news that is?"

Derwentwater replied by detailing, in

somewhat glowing language, and with a slight colouring from his own enthusiasm, all the first partial successes of the insurgents in Scotland. The greater part of the intelligence was merely confirmatory of the rumours, which had reached Smeaton during the preceding day, that the Earl of Mar had taken Perth, that arms and ammunition had been seized at Burntisland, that the army of King James III. was daily increasing in numbers, that money was flowing in rapidly, and that, while the troops of the House of Hanover were in a very critical position at Stirling, Mar was preparing to force the passage of the Forth, and that the Western clans were menacing the rear of King George's army. It was added, that a great number of towns and districts of much importance had openly declared for the House of Stuart, and that King James had been proclaimed at Aberdeen, at Dunkeld, at Castle Gordon, at Brechin, at Montrose, at

Dundee, and at Inverness, while the whole of Galloway and Dumfrieshire was stated to be flaming in insurrection.

Broad, general facts, without the small circumstances which modify them, and sometimes affect their whole bearings, are very apt to produce the most erroneous conclusions ; and, as Lord Derwentwater stated not, and, probably, knew not, the multitude of counterbalancing disadvantages under which the insurrectionary leaders lay, Smeaton naturally was led to look with a much more hopeful eye on the cause he had now determined to espouse.

His new acquaintance mentioned one important fact ; namely, that the Duke of Argyle had taken command of the troops at Stirling. "But," added he, "with all his skill, he will have no easy task to prevent defeat, and, probably, surrender." He was not mistaken ; for, had Mar possessed ordinary military knowledge and expe-

rience, there can be little doubt that the gallant nobleman opposed to him would have been forced to retreat, if retreat had been possible ; but neither Derwentwater nor Lord Eskdale were at all personally aware that Mar was not a soldier ; and the inconceivable folly of appointing a man totally destitute of military science to command an ill-disciplined army, in circumstances of the greatest delicacy and danger, did not once enter their imaginations. Nevertheless, the well-known skill, courage, and determination of Argyle, and the strong resolution he had shown in taking command in person of the small force at Stirling, led Smeaton to suspect that he either knew of circumstances, or calculated upon events, of which the Jacobite party in England were not at all aware.

It was too late now, however, he thought, to hesitate, even if his decision had depended upon the probabilities of success ;

and he joined the rest of the party in a hasty consultation, in which, from his want of all knowledge of the country round, he could give very little advice, except in regard to military matters, where he possessed more experience than any one present. Glad to have amongst them an officer of some skill, the noblemen and gentlemen present proceeded to an inspection of their little force, amounting, in all, at this time, to only sixty or seventy horse. Arms, they literally had none, except the ordinary riding swords used at that period in England, (which were of little if any use in the field,) and here and there a brace of pistols at the saddle-bow. It was evidently an insurrection hurried forward without thought or preparation.

Every man, however, knew of some place where people would come in, in numbers great, to the standard of King James; but Smeaton pointed out that the most pressing necessity was to arm those who were al-

ready collected. The first blow, he said, should be struck at any place where their local knowledge showed them that a store of the necessary weapons was to be procured ; but no one knew where any such supply existed, except at Newcastle, which they were manifestly too feeble to attack. It was judged, therefore, needful to recruit their numbers even before they sought for arms ; and those who were best acquainted with the district, proposed that they should proceed to Rothbury and Warkworth, as the line in which recruits were most likely to come in.

Smeaton had nothing to object ; and, forming into something like regular array, they rode from the place of meeting after a discussion which, though hurried and desultory, occupied several hours. The Northumbrian noblemen and gentlemen were full of hope and enthusiasm ; but the young Earl who had so unwillingly joined them, viewed the matter with less sanguine anticipations,

and, from the expressions of his new companions, derived no very favourable idea of their capability of conducting a great enterprise to a successful conclusion.

CHAPTER IV.

WHAT need I tell of the first proceedings of the small body of gentlemen whom we have seen set out on the path of insurrection ? How they marched to Rothbury, and thence to hermit-loving Warkworth ; how they received small reinforcements as they went along, and proclaimed King James the Third wherever they came ; and how at Morpeth their numbers were increased to three hundred horse—are all facts well known to everybody. Neither

need I pause to describe the disappointment and apprehension occasioned by the scantiness of the numbers which came in on each day's march, nor dwell upon the anxious consultations which took place night after night, when they still found themselves unprepared for any enterprise of importance.

All hope of successfully attacking Newcastle soon passed away ; and only one event occurred to brighten the dark prospect before them—namely, the capture of Holy Island by one of their number, Lancelot Errington, a gentleman of ancient family long resident near Hexham. The very next tidings received, however, were to the effect that the small fort had been retaken by the troops from Berwick, and that Errington was wounded and a prisoner.

This was a bitter disappointment ; for the least success in such perilous enterprises, raises hope high, and often paves the way for other advantages. They flat-

tered themselves that they only wanted some happy exploit to rouse the neighbouring gentry in their favour ; to encourage the timid and confirm the wavering. But the disaster which followed this first gleam, extinguished all such vain hopes ; and the principal leaders met, the evening after the intelligence was received, to consult as to what was to be done.

They were bold and high-hearted men, though few of them brought skill, experience, or wisdom to the cause ; and not one of them would listen to the course which, probably, some inward conviction told each of them was the only path of safety—namely, dispersing their followers, abandoning the enterprise, and making their submission. Yet what was to be done ? All their expectations of a general rising were at an end ; they had no infantry, nor weapons wherewith to arm infantry ; troops were reported to be marching towards them from various quarters ; and all they had to oppose to them was only three hundred horse !

Many a plan was proposed—many a course suggested—at their sad conference, till, at length, Smeaton, who had sat silent and thoughtful, with his head resting on his hand, looked up, saying :

“ It seems to me, my lords and gentlemen, that there is but one thing to be done. With such scanty means as we can command, no great purpose can be effected. We cannot even undertake one of those trifling enterprises which, when successful, often change altogether the fortunes of such movements as these. We must have more men before we can do anything.”

“ Ay, but where are we to get them, my good lord ?” asked Lord Widrington. “ That is the question which puzzles us all.”

“ Thus,” replied Smeaton, boldly. “ We have certain intelligence that Lord Kenmure, the Earl of Nithsdale, and other noblemen and gentlemen, are in arms, just across the border, to the number, we are

assured, of four or five hundred men. They have already undertaken several movements of importance ; and, when joined by our small force, will be able to effect much more. The object of our own body, and of that under the noblemen I have mentioned, should be to unite as soon as possible, which can easily be done, either by our withdrawing at once from Northumberland, and joining Kenmure, or by that nobleman advancing to our support and enabling us to undertake some enterprise of importance. Much can be done either in the north of England, or in the south of Scotland, by eight hundred men, which cannot even be thought of by three hundred ; and my own opinion is, that we should march at day-break to-morrow, to effect our junction with Viscount Kenmure ; and, by giving force and vigour to the insurrection in the Lowlands, occupy the troops of the House of Hanover, and enable the Earl of Mar to profit fully by his advan-

tageous position and the number of his forces."

This proposal, like every other proposal, in a meeting where there is no real subordination, called forth a long and rambling discussion, and a great variety of opinions. Every one saw the wisdom of joining the two streams of insurrection in one ; but none agreed as to the mode in which it was to be effected. National prejudices and antipathies, engendered by long border warfare, were by no means extinct ; and, although some few saw the prudence of Smeaton's suggestion of withdrawing from Northumberland and confining their operations, for the time, to the south of Scotland, others declared that many of their followers would abandon the cause, if such a retreat were attempted ; and one gentleman boldly announced his belief that, in that case, they should not take fifty men across the border with them. This opinion prevailed, and it was deter-

mined to negotiate with Lord Kenmure for the advance of his forces into England.

The next question was, who was to be the negotiator ? No one present was personally acquainted with the Scottish nobleman—and, to say truth, few liked to undertake a task in which they might very naturally expect to meet with a repulse ; for every one felt it to be but little likely that Kenmure would cross the border with his men, without some better inducements than they had in their power to hold out. At length, after a number of excuses had been given by various gentlemen in the room, for not undertaking the task, the Earl of Eskdale volunteered to be the person.

“ I will endeavour,” he said, “ if you entrust me with the commission, to induce Lord Kenmure to join you, and will, of course, refrain from pointing out to him, whatever may be my own opinion, that it would be wiser for you to join him. However, I cannot use any arguments in op-

position, if he should urge the latter course ; but will be better for General Forster to write to him by my hands, employing all those arguments which have been conclusive in his own mind."

Forster, however, was very unwilling to write, and only in the end consented to give such credentials to the young Earl as would show that he was authorised to treat by the whole party. Even these he would have postponed till the following morning, alleging various motives for delay ; but Smeaton interrupted him somewhat impatiently, saying,

" There is no time to be lost, sir. The distance is considerable, if the forces of Lord Kenmure are at Moffat, as we have been informed. We are more than thirty miles from Wooler ; and, whether I take the road by Coldstream or direct to Kelso, nearly two days must be consumed in my journey alone. Then will come the negotiation, which may be more tedious than we imagine, as well as the march of the troops

hither. I shall, therefore, most decidedly set out to-night ; and, if I might advise, you would, at all events, retire upon Rothbury, which is so far on the way to meet our friends from the north. If there is any delay, you may all be cut to pieces before they arrive to your support."

" Oh, we shall retire to Rothbury, of course," said Lord Derwentwater ; " and the credentials can soon be prepared without much trouble to any one. If you are willing to set out so speedily, it must not be any act of ours that delays you."

" In half an hour I shall be ready," replied Smeaton, rising ; " and, in the meantime, I trust that the paper will be drawn up."

It was a full hour, however, before he set out ; and then, notwithstanding the entreaties of Van Noost to be allowed to accompany him, the young Earl departed, only attended by his servant.

The light was already failing rapidly ; and,

before many minutes had passed, night fell over his road. A little more than three hours brought him to Wooler, with tired horses and a somewhat anxious mind ; for he felt all the importance of the mission he had undertaken, and the movement of troops in the neighbourhood of Berwick rendered it not at all improbable that he might be stopped upon the way. He found the little town of Wooler quiet and soldierless, however ; and, as the hour was not late, he had no difficulty in procuring refreshment at the little inn for himself, his servant, and his horses.

Anxious, to cross the border, beyond which the general feelings of the country people rendered the roads more safe to persons engaged in the Jacobite cause, he only gave himself an hour and a half's rest, and then set out again, taking the direct road to Kelso, which, though at that time steep and rugged enough, had great advantages over that by Coldstream, both in point of and of security ; for he had

learned at Wooler that a small party of horse had occupied the latter town during the morning. He was forced to proceed somewhat slowly, indeed; for his horses had been in exercise already during the early part of the day; and the wearisome twenty miles to Kelso occupied several hours.

The whole town, when he entered it, was profoundly still, and the inhabitants plunged in sleep. Not a solitary light was to be seen in any window; and the young nobleman had no means of knowing whether he might not rouse a lion instead of a lamb, if he attempted to wake any of the good citizens from their slumbers. In these circumstances, he resolved to push forward, notwithstanding the weariness of his horse, and trust for hospitality to the first small hamlet or cottage he could meet with. He reckoned without his host however; for, at that time, the country between Kelso and Hawick was much less thickly peopled than at present; and, after going some two miles farther, he was fain to turn the horses into

a green meadow at the bottom of a valley, and seek shelter for himself and his servant beneath a loose stone wall.

The autumnal wind was blowing bleak and cold ; but the beasts were better off than the men, for they soon found provender sufficient in the meadow, while their riders were left without food. Tom Higham groaned in the spirit as he sat, wrapped up in his cloak, shivering behind the wall ; and Smeaton could hear him more than once muttering to himself—

“I am a mighty great fool. That is as clear as moonshine.”

Perhaps the young nobleman thought the same of himself ; but he bore his situation more patiently ; and, shrouding himself from the cutting blast as well as he could, tried to obtain some sleep, as he had often done in other lands under similar circumstances.

It was in such lonely and darksome hours, when the mind was the most depressed, and action impossible, that the thought of

Emmeline frequently presented itself to Smeaton. The remembrance was like an angel visit; for although many a melancholy and many an anxious train of ideas was awakened by the recollection of her and of her fate, yet there was something in the images then called up, which left his mind calmed and even cheered. I believe it is a quality of high, pure love to strengthen and to elevate, however adverse may be the circumstances. The images which now arose in his mind effectually banished sleep; and, when the grey daylight at length began to appear in the east, he was still waking, though his servant had been long buried in deep slumber. Smeaton rose at once, and, rousing the man, told him to catch the horses, and replace the saddles and bridles.

"Ay," cried Tom Higham, "we had better do that before any one comes and catches *us*; for the beasts have had a good feed at Sawney's expense, and a canny Scot is not a man to let us off scot free if he catches *us*."

"He shall not need," replied Smeaton, taking out his purse and putting down a couple of shillings on the top of the stone wall. "I trust he will find them ; but if not, my conscience is free."

The horses gave them some trouble, for they were not at all willing to quit their comfortable pasture for the hard, stony road ; and just when the young nobleman had got his own beast by the forelock, he heard the voice of his man calling for help in lamentable accents. Turning round, he beheld good Master Higham in the grasp of a very tall, stout man, in an ordinary farming dress ; and, leading his horse up, he inquired what was the matter.

"I cannot understand what he means," cried Tom Higham ; "but I know that he talks something about spearing me, or my spearing at him, though devil a spear there is amongst us."

Smeaton, however, more conversant, from his family connections, with the language of the country, was soon made to comprehend

that the farmer, having seen two horses in his field from the window of his house, which lay hard by, though the darkness had previously concealed it, had come down in high wrath to repel an intrusion which, to say truth, was somewhat common at that time and in that part of the country.

“ My good friend,” replied the young nobleman, “ we took refuge here in the night, neither very well knowing the way nor where to find shelter ; and I certainly did not intend to go away without paying for the grass which the horses have taken.”

“ No that likely,” replied the man, doggedly. “ If ye wanted shelter, why did na ye joost tirl at the pin up by, or gie a halloo under the window ?”

“ Because I did not know there was a window near,” replied Smeaton, with a smile. As to my intention of paying you, you can satisfy yourself ; for, before I went to help my servant in catch-

ing the horses, I put a couple of shillings down on the top of the wall, which I thought must be sufficient for the grass they had eaten."

The cautious farmer let go his hold of Higham's neck ; but, before he expressed himself satisfied or otherwise, walked straight to the wall and took up the money, which he speedily found. His countenance brightened at once ; and the young Earl said to himself, with a somewhat cynical smile—"I wish my poor father's countrymen would not give so much cause for the imputation of greediness which their southern neighbours are so ready to throw upon them."

He was mistaken, however, in the present instance ; for, as soon as he approached, the good farmer held out the money to him, saying—"Here, tak the siller. It was no for that I was a bit cankered wi' the wee body." And he went on to explain that it was the fact of the horses being put into the field without his leave which

had roused his ire. "There's na that man leeving," he continued, "wha can say I ever grudged him a bit for himself or his beastie ; but ye might hae found a better beild up by, if ye had just trotted on a bit."

Nothing would serve him now, but he must give the two travellers some breakfast at what he called "his wee thack housie," which proved a very comfortable farm dwelling.

As information was one of the Earl's greatest wants, he readily accepted the invitation, much to the joy and satisfaction of Tom Higham, who soon contrived to catch his horse and follow his master and the farmer as they walked away out of the field and up the road. It was not easy to induce the latter to speak upon any dangerous subject. The moment that politics, or the state of the parties then existing, was mentioned, he curled himself like a hedgehog, to use Tom Higham's expression ; and it was not till he had

discovered that his less wary guest was going to Moffat for the purpose of seeing the Viscount Kenmure, that he at all unfolded himself. Then, indeed, he spoke more freely, but with a certain degree of caution still, as if not yet quite convinced that the English traveller was not trying to worm the secret of his political propensities out of him. He cared not for one King or the other, he said ; no, not a boddle. He was a peaceable man, and they might fight it out amongst them ; but, as for the Viscount Kenmure and “hishandfu’of men,” he had heard tell, but he would not warrant it, for he knew nothing of his own knowledge, that he was not at Moffat at all, but at the town of Hawick.

At the same time, as far as slight indications went, he seemed not to be ill-disposed to the cause of the House of Stuart. He took particular pains to direct Smeaton right on the road to Hawick, and insisted upon feeding both the horses with something more solid than the grass

which they had cropped during the night. Gradually, too, he relaxed a little in regard to intelligence, and informed the young nobleman that there was no force capable of opposing the march of the Jacobite forces within many miles. He added that he had heard at Kelso market that Kenmure had given the good folks of Dumfries a fright some days before, but that, finding the citizens better prepared than he had expected, he had retreated to Langholm and thence to Hawick. As to the number of Kenmure's forces, he either could not or would not give any information ; but it was at all events satisfactory to the young nobleman to find that his journey was greatly shortened ; and, after having partaken of the worthy man's good cheer, he remounted, and set out upon his way.

A ride of a few hours brought him to Hawick ; but he found that Kenmure had not thought fit to take up his quarters in the town itself, but had occupied

a village at a few miles' distance, where his cavalry was less likely to be embarrassed in case of attack. Thither, then, the young nobleman pursued his journey, guided by a country lad on foot ; for the directions he received were far too elaborate and confused to be easily comprehended.

In consequence of various delays, he did not come in sight of the village till towards three o'clock ; and then but very few symptoms of anything like a numerous body of men were to be perceived. A sentry, if so he could be called, with a broad sword at his side and a pistol in his hand, was seen at the end of the long street of straggling, irregular houses which constituted the village ; and here and there, a person in the garb of a gentleman, booted and spurred, but with no other arms than his sword, was observed loitering about the doors. No precaution was taken on his entering the village, the sentry merely directing him, when he asked for the Lord Kenmure, to the minister's house near the kirk ; and,

wending his way through heaps of filth and cabbage stalks, which occupied a certain space before every house, and rendered the road well nigh impassable for any vehicle on wheels, he at length reached the entrance of the manse, before which stood a similar figure to that which kept sentry at the commencement of the village. The approach of a couple of horsemen had caused a little commotion in the place ; and two or three heads were thrust from the windows as Smeaton rode up ; but he was admitted to the room in which the Viscount sat, without any delay, and presented to him the brief note he bore from Mr. Forster.

A long deliberation ensued, in the course of which many questions were asked by the Scottish nobleman. Smeaton told him the exact truth in regard to the numbers and position of the little insurgent force in Northumberland, adding that they had heard that the Lord Kenmure's troop amounted to five hundred men.

"I wish it did," replied the Viscount,

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with a somewhat cold laugh. "I think if that had been the case, my Lord, you would have had to come on to Dumfries. No, no. I will deal honestly by you, as you have dealt by me. If you are a handful, we are less. We do not number more than one half the force you say General Forster has with him."

"Then the more need of your immediate union," observed the young Earl.

"Ay, but it would have been better for him to come to me than for me to go to him," responded Kenmure. "Something might have been done here; but I gather from what you say, my noble friend, that little is to be done on the other side of the border; and every step I take in that direction, draws me farther from my resources and from all chance of support, of which we have good hope from the north."

"It is too late now, I fear, my Lord," said Smeaton, "to consider such objections. Perhaps the course you mention might have been wisest. Here are

two small parties, engaged in the same cause, but separate from each other, with considerable bodies of the enemy's troops hovering round them. If you continue in this state of isolation, at fifty or sixty miles distance, you are liable at any moment to be cut up in detail, without the power of aiding each other, and probably before your succour from the north can arrive. Allow me to urge that it would be very much better for you to march without delay to join the gentlemen in Northumberland. You will then have a force of about five hundred men united, with which you can show a firm face to the enemy, even if you cannot undertake any great enterprise ; and, should it be judged necessary after consultation with General Forster, you can fall back upon your resources here and make good any well-chosen position till you are reinforced."

" Well, well," replied Lord Kenmure, " I must consult with my friends here before we can decide ; but, in the mean time,

I must care for your accommodation during the night. We have crammed the manse as full as it can hold already ; and I fear you will have but poor accommodation.— Some one be good enough to call Quarter-master Calderwood.”

This was accordingly done ; and, after a short consultation between that personage and Lord Kenmure, the young Earl was placed in his hands, to be conducted to the only quarters which could be assigned to him, and left the manse somewhat doubtful as to the result of the consultation which was about to commence.

CHAPTER V.

DARKNESS was rapidly descending, when the Earl of Eskdale, guided by Quartermaster Calderwood, entered the little street of the hamlet. They found Tom Higham amusing himself with talking nonsense in a strong London jargon to some Scotch lads assembled round the door, who hardly understood what he said, and whose own language was well nigh incomprehensible to him. His master beckoned him to fol-

low with the horses, and was led to the very outskirts of the village, where a small cottage appeared, in no very good state of preservation, and quite separated from the rest of the hamlet, being situated in the midst of its own garden or kail-yard.

“ This is the only place I can assign to your Lordship,” said Calderwood, as they approached ; “ and I fear you must share it with another gentleman who joined us this afternoon from France. There is room, however, for two ; and I must dispose of the servants elsewhere.”

“ I am in no way nice, Quartermaster,” replied Smeaton. “ I have been too much accustomed to a life in arms to mind sleeping under that wall, should it be necessary.”

“ Ah, my Lord, I am glad to hear it,” replied Calderwood. “ We are sadly in want of a few men of experience amongst us.”

The ordinary reflection passed through Smeaton’s mind, that the more men are

wanting in experience themselves, the less are they inclined to profit by the experience of others ; but he forbore reply ; and Calderwood opened the door. No passage, no internal door, shut the single room in the lower part of the house from the external air ; and, on entering, Smeaton found himself at once in a large apartment, tenanted by four persons. One was in the garb of a servant ; two others seemed to be the master of the tenement and his wife, a sandy-haired man and a black-haired woman of about forty years of age ; and these three were bustling about, apparently preparing for the evening meal. The fourth person was seated before a blazing fire on the north side of the cottage. He was tall, stout, and apparently well dressed ; but the last gleam of day being on the point of extinction, no candles lighted, and a considerable quantity of smoke in the room, not much could be discerned of his figure by the flickering flame of the fire.

Mr. Calderwood spoke a few words to him, explaining the necessity under which Lord Kenmure lay of quartering another gentleman in the same tenement. The stranger immediately rose, with some polite expression of pleasure, and, while the good woman of the house lighted a solitary candle, advanced to meet the new comer.

The presence of the stranger was dignified and easy, his figure fine, and his face, if not altogether handsome or pleasing, striking and remarkable. He had much the air of a military man ; and his profession, or his propensities, seemed indicated by a deep and somewhat recent scar upon his brow.

The moment he saw Smeaton, his face flushed either with pleasure or some other emotion ; and the young nobleman, after gazing at him for a moment, as if partly recognising him and partly doubting his own eyes, held out his hand, saying :

“ This is an unexpected pleasure.”

The stranger took his offered hand and shook it hard, but with a peculiar look, not the most cordial. Putting his face close to Smeaton's ear, he said—

“Call me Somerville. My name is Somerville here.”

Smeaton quietly inclined his head, saying :

“I believed you were in very distant lands, Mr. Somerville. When did you return to Europe ?”

“Three or four months ago,” replied his companion. “I have been wandering about in France since.—Now, my good woman, will my supper never be ready? Come, bestir yourself, and add something to it for this gentleman, who is doubtless as hungry as I am.”

There was evidently a feeling of restraint upon him as he spoke, which he endeavoured in vain to cover by an affectation of ease and carelessness ; and the moment he had addressed this adjuration to the woman of the house, he fell into a fit of thought,

without at all attending to her grumbling reply.

Smeaton was also thoughtful ; but he did not lose his ease and calmness ; and, by a few good-humoured words, soon induced their hostess to hurry herself somewhat more than she had been doing previously.

I might give a long detail of all the little events which took place during the next hour, and relate how Smeaton's servant, and the servant of the gentleman calling himself Somerville, were provided with quarters elsewhere ; how a bare-legged damsel, with all the beauty of youth and health, a clear complexion, and large black eyes, came in to borrow a pot, and was not suffered to depart without many gallant compliments and a half-resisted kiss from Mr. Somerville ; and how two pretty children, with very scanty clothing, from a neighbouring cottage, stood leaning upon each other, and watched the strange gentlemen who had come, while they enjoyed the meal

prepared for them. But I must pass over all such minute facts, and bring the reader at once to the moment when, after having concluded their supper, Smeaton and his companion were alone together, the host and hostess having retired to their early rest, leaving the two gentlemen with a large jug of whiskey on the table and a kettle of hot water on the fire.

More than once during the earlier part of the meal, Somerville had given a momentary glance at his companion's face from under his heavy eyebrows, but withdrawn it as soon as he perceived that Smeaton's eyes were directed towards him. He meditated much, and often too ; and, as I have said, there was an uneasy air about him which surprised his comrade for the time ; for, when he had known him slightly some years before, he was famous for that easy, daring impudence which was much affected in all countries by the class called men of wit and pleasure.

When they were left alone together

however, Smeaton at once changed the tone of the conversation, saying :

“ Well, now we are without witnesses, we may speak of more interesting matters, Newark. When did you return from South America ? I heard with great surprise, when I was at Nancy, that you had determined to turn merchant, and had taken some *nom-de-guerre*.”

“ Ay, a merchant *adventurer*,” retorted the other, laying great stress upon the last word. “ But it was more in the latter than the former character that I went, my good Lord. I have been back, as I told you, about three months, after having gilded my purse with a few ducats in the new world, let the Dons’ blood when they were in danger of calenture from too much heat, and basked in the sweet smiles of the olive-brown dames of Peru and Mexico. I got tired of that, as of everything else in this wearisome world ; and, hearing that stirring times were coming in this quarter, I thought I might as well return and

stake a trifle—such as life and fortune—upon the game that is to be played, in the hope of recovering, somehow or another, a portion of what I and mine have lost."

"Did you see your uncle and aunt when you were in France?" asked Smeaton, fixing his eyes steadily upon him.

"No," replied the other, in a careless tone. "The good Lord, my uncle, is somewhat worse than senile, having fallen into a decrepitude of temper as well as of mind and body. He has turned himself into a corn-merchant, too, which does not suit my notions of propriety; and, as he never appreciated my high qualities and good points, I did not think it worth while to trouble him with my presence."

"I know you never agreed," remarked Smeaton; "and of course it is not for me to say which was in the right—"

"Meaning that I was in the wrong," said the other, with a laugh.

But Smeaton continued, as if he had not been interrupted, saying:

“ You do not do him justice when you talk of senility. His mind is as clear and strong as ever, and his bodily frame but little shaken by the passing of years. I have had every opportunity of judging, having passed some weeks with himself and Lady Newark before I came to England.”

“ Ah! is he so strong in virtue and in muscles ?” exclaimed the other, with a bitter laugh. “ Heaven receive him to the place of saints; and that right speedily !”

“ Nay, nay,” said Smeaton. “ I am sure, Newark, that wish is more upon your lips than in your heart.”

“ It is not, by ——,” cried the other, with a fierce oath. “ I should then be Lord Newark, at all events ; and, as to ever getting back the lands as well as the lordship, that would be as the stars willed it ; and they have always been kinder to me than he.”

“ I do not think you ever judged him fairly,” said Smeaton, gravely. “ He was

certainly very kind to you in early life, and strained his small means to afford you a high education along with his two poor sons ; but—”

“ But I was what old women call wild, you would say,” cried the other, who seemed to have a great habit of interrupting. “ Well, I *was* wild, and scoffed a little at the doctrines and notions of elderly gentlewomen of both sexes, liking much better the doctrines of younger ladies, and occasionally quarrelled with gentlemen and soldiers who entertained heretical notions as to my right and liberties in certain cases. But what of that ? I was none the worse for that.—No, no, Eskdale. The head and front of my offence was his own weakness, folly, or treachery, in suffering his daughter to remain in the hands of the knave, John Newark.”

“ How could he help it ?” asked Smeaton. “ His life was not worth an hour’s purchase if he ventured into England ;

and there was no one in this island on whom he could rely to take her from the sort of imprisonment in which she was kept, and replace her under her father's care. Doubt not, he would willingly have done it, had it been possible."

"Why did he not rely on me?" retorted the other, vehemently. "I would have released her, and brought her safely to France. I offered to do it—I had everything prepared ; but he would not hear of it."

He muttered something to himself which Smeaton did not clearly hear, and then went on aloud—

"He made me appear like a vain boaster in the eyes of a dozen people. I told sweet John Newark that I would take away the girl from him, and cut his throat in the house where he has ensconced himself so snugly. I will do it too, before I have done with him."

"You must get him out of the Tower first," replied Smeaton ; "for he is safely lodged there by this time."

"Ha!" exclaimed the other, laughing aloud. "A bagged fox! But come now," he continued, in a gayer tone; "what report do you make of that fair west countrie, which I hear you have been visiting lately? Was Sir John flourishing when you were there? And what adventures did you meet with?"

"Sir John was quite well, and apparently prosperous," replied Smeaton; "that is to say, till the very day I came away, on the morning of which he was apprehended, and sent, I imagine, to the Tower. As to adventures, I met with few, and those not much worth relating."

He paused for a moment, asking himself if he should say more; but the other again went on, inquiring—

"What of the lady, what of the fair lady, sweet Mistress Emmeline? Is she as beautiful as I hear?"

"She is very beautiful and very amiable," replied Smeaton.

"And the son, Sir John Newark's son?"

demanded the other. "They say his father intends to marry him to Emmeline in the hope of securing his title to the estates, under all circumstances, and obtaining the title of Baron Newark, whatever party is in power. Did you hear anything of all this?"

"Nothing," replied Smeaton, thoughtfully. "From the character of the man indeed," he continued, "such a scheme is not unlikely; but I do not think there could be any idea of carrying it immediately into execution. Richard Newark is a mere boy, some years younger than Emmeline herself. When first I saw him in London, he was rude, wild, and strange; but he has wonderfully improved, both in intellect and manners, in the troublous scenes we have gone through; and, though he will ever be eccentric, and very different from other persons, yet there are high and good qualities in him which make me love and esteem him much."

"Is he with his father in London?" asked the other, quietly.

"No," replied Smeaton. "He came with me into Northumberland to join the Northumbrian gentlemen now in arms; and, if Lord Kenmure agrees to the proposal which I have brought him this evening for a union of the two forces, you will see him in a day or two. In that case," he continued, gravely, almost sternly, "I must request you to treat him with all kindness, remembering that his father's faults are not his, and that he is under my protection."

The other laughed, though the hint galled him a little.

"Oh, certainly," he replied. "Your high and mighty protection, Lord Eskdale, will not be needed against me. I am not going to quarrel with a boy, nor to cut his throat because his father's ought to have been cut long ago. So there was no need of any threat."

"I used no threat indeed, Newark,"

said the Earl ; “ but, knowing you are of a quick and impetuous temper, merely suggested considerations which I thought would enable you to control it.”

“ Ay, right good,” returned the other ; “ but there is no fear. I am not quarrelsome now-a-days, Heaven knows, or there is many a man I might quarrel with, without seeking out a boy for the purpose. But what, in this rout and dispersion, has become of fair Emmeline herself ? Have you brought her too with you into Northumberland ?”

“ No indeed,” replied the young Earl. “ Sir John has taken her to London with him.”

“ Damnation !” muttered the other. “ Why,” he added, after an effort to control himself, “ if he had left her behind at Ale, nothing would have been so easy as to get her off to France.”

“ But he did not so leave her,” replied Smeaton, calmly. “ And now, Newark, I will go and lie down in the room they showed me ;

for I have ridden hard and far, and passed last night under a stone wall. I must be up early, too, in the morning ; for these noble lords here must come to a speedy decision ; and that decision must be communicated at once to General Forster.”

“ Well, I shall stay here and make some way in the flagon,” said the other. “ Though this stuff, which is just the same as they call usquebagh in Ireland, is little better than molten fire, yet I feel my blood wants warming in this accursed cold country.”

“ Your blood was always hot enough,” observed Smeaton, moving towards the end of the stairs ; “ and that spirit is too strong for me. So good night, Newark.” And he retired to rest.

The other remained for two hours or more, till the candle had nearly burnt into the socket. During that time, however, he drank little, but was absorbed in deep meditation, chequered apparently by many various feelings ; for now he

laughed, and now he looked stern and fierce.

"He did not recognise me," he muttered. "That is clear. No, not even by the mark he put upon my forehead. He shall pay that debt ; but not just now. I can wait ; and the interest will accumulate.—We may make something of this," he again muttered, after a long pause. "We may make something of this. Let me see. John in prison on a charge of high treason ; William marries the heiress ; and then—what then ? Why, services to the House of Hanover ; one slight whirl of the weather-cock, and all is safe, especially if one could bring some intelligence with one.—A Newark on the side of Hanover ! That seems a strange figure of speech. One starts at it. Why should I care for whom I draw my sword ? What have the Stuarts done for me? Ah! ha! ha! Doubtless, there will be plenty to keep me in countenance."

Thus saying, he rose, and retired also to rest.

Before daybreak, on the following morning, the young Earl was up and dressed ; and the sky was still grey, when a messenger from Lord Kenmure reached him, requesting his presence at that nobleman's head-quarters. He found everything in bustle and activity ; and he could see at once that a resolution was taken.

" We have just come to a sudden determination, my lord," said Kenmure, when Smeaton entered. " We find that Brigadier Macintosh, instead of advancing at once, after passing the Frith of Forth, has marched towards Edinburgh. He writes word, however, that he will join us shortly with his infantry, if we can maintain ourselves for a few days in the south, and gather together a body of cavalry. We have, therefore, resolved to advance as far as Rothbury to effect our junction with General Forster. It will then be necessary to retire across the border, and take measures for keeping up our communication

with Macintosh. We shall consequently be your companions, instead of your followers, on the march."

In an hour from that time, the troop was mounted, and on its way ; but, when in full array, its numbers and its equipment were inferior even to the young Earl's expectations.

CHAPTER VI.

IT was on the evening of the brightest day which had shone for the last fortnight, when the Earl of Eskdale, accompanied by Mr. William Newark, under the name of Somerville, and followed by their two servants, rode into the small town of Rothbury. They found the place all gay and busy, the news of the advance of Lord Kenmure having reached it some hours before, and spread joy and expectation amongst the disheartened gentlemen of

Northumberland. Half-a-dozen times, in riding through the little street, the young nobleman was stopped to inquire how far distant was the Scottish force ; and his reply of " Half a day's march" seemed to give universal satisfaction.

One of the readiest to accost him was Van Noost, who, after having received his answer to the first question, ran on by the side of the Earl's horse, telling him, with great pride and satisfaction, that he had taken upon himself the duty of engineer and armorer,—that he had repaired and polished innumerable guns and pistols, and cast some thousands of bullets for the service of the forces.

" Your Lordship's quarters are quite ready for you, too," he cried. " I have taken care of that. All the Keanton men are lodged together in those two white houses ; and in the one on this side is a capital apartment for you, next to the quarters of Master Richard.—By the way,"

he continued, “a boy has arrived from Ale Manor with a large packet for you, which should have come to hand six days ago ; but the poor lad has had to hunt us all over the country ; and it is wonderful how he has escaped the enemy ; for he has been in the very heart of General Carpenter’s dragoons at Newcastle, and brought us intelligence of all his doings.”

A few steps more took them to the house which Van Noost had pointed out ; and Richard Newark came down to the door to meet his noble friend. He greeted him with every mark of joy and satisfaction ; but glanced his eye, from time to time, towards Smeaton’s companion with a look of inquiry and distrust. He rambled on, indeed, in his usual way, saying, as the Earl dismounted and gave directions regarding the horses and the servants :

“ Well, Eskdale, so you have brought us the Scots. Now there is hope of doing something ; for all this marching and coun-

termarching is poor stuff ; and I have felt like one out of a flock of sheep, driven hither and thither by the shepherd's dog : —The man does not hear me. The Scotch wind has blown away his hearing.—Eskdale, I say, there is a large packet come for you from Ale, addressed to you in Madame Culpepper's own peculiar cipher. I had a thousand minds to break it open ; for I longed for news, and I am sure there must be some for me. But a seal—I don't like fingering a seal. Strange that a little bit of red resin, under the effect of our prejudices, should be stronger than an iron box !”

Smeaton shook him warmly by the hand, and, requesting his companion of the march to follow, entered the house with his young friend, who asked in a low voice—

“ Who have you got there ? His face does not please me.”

“ It is, nevertheless, the face of a relation of yours,” replied Smeaton. “ I will

introduce him to you as soon as we are alone ; but let me see this packet. It may contain news of importance."

At the top of the first flight of steps were two good rooms, one of which, on the right hand, was retained for the use of the young nobleman ; and here he found the packet which had been mentioned. Breaking it open at once, he perceived that it contained two letters for himself, and two for Richard Newark. Giving the latter instantly to his young friend, he invited Somerville to seat himself before he opened the letters which bore his own address, although one of them, in a small, delicate hand—more like that of a lady in the present day than one of those times—seemed too precious to be long delayed. As soon as he had shown this piece of attention to his guest, he retreated into the window, and eagerly broke the seal of the letter addressed as I have mentioned. He was not deceived. Emmeline's name was at the bottom of the lines that were

written upon the page ; and, with a beating heart, he read words which might well have come from a more experienced mind or a less tender and affectionate heart. Yet, love and tenderness were evident throughout, as the contents may show.

“ MY BELOVED HUSBAND,

“ I snatch a moment and an opportunity to write to you, knowing what you must feel, but not knowing what you are doing. Anxious as I am to hear where you are, and all that you can tell me of your proceedings, I fondly believe that you are more anxious still to hear of your Emmeline. I am in London, in a small lodging near the Tower, at number thirty-two, in Tower Street, surrounded by the servants of my cousin, Sir John Newark, and, as he believes, cut off from all communication with other persons by their means. Amongst them, however, is one placed there by her who has befriended us

at Ale Manor, and who has found means to assure me that he is devoted alone to my service. He will contrive to convey this to Devonshire.. The time allowed me is but short.

" And now, what shall I say to you, my dear husband ? I need not speak of love and gratitude. I need not tell you how my whole heart is devoted to you. I need not say how earnestly I wish it were possible for you to come yourself, and either claim me as your own in the face of all the world, or take me home in secret to spend my life with you in quiet retirement and content. But I must beseech you on no account to venture near this city, unless you can do so in perfect safety ; to sacrifice for Emmeline no security, to run no risk, and above all, not to let affection for her—that eagerness to see her which I am sure you feel —nor the indignation which you must experience at the conduct you have met with, induce you to take any part in the struggle for the crown of these realms, which your

own calm and ever just judgment does not warrant. I am sure you will not ; and yet I write these words because I feel that it will be a comfort to you to know that Emmeline has no selfish wish to be gratified at your expense. Consult your own honour ; consult your own dignity. Think of her ; love her for ever, but do not let one thought of her, one feeling for her, influence you in circumstances where duty and honour are concerned, knowing that your honour is far dearer to her than her own happiness or her own life.

“ Oh, how I long to see you ! How I long to tell you, dear Henry, all I have suffered, all I have thought, all I have felt—to pour out my whole soul and heart to him who has alone seen and known them. But let not my longing have the least weight with you. Act as if I had never existed, or as if you had never known me ; but let the memory of your Emmeline be as the miniature-portrait of one well loved, ever nearest to your heart, and think,

whenever you think of her, that she is blessing you, and praying for you, and beseeching Heaven to guide, preserve, and prosper you in whatever course your own wisdom and God's grace shall lead you.

"I know not how to end my letter. The words seem so strange that I have to write ; and yet I am—I feel—I know I am—

"Your affectionate and dutiful wife,

"EMMELINE ESKDALE."

Smeaton, with all his warm and strong enthusiasm, was not a man of that soft and melting character which tender feelings, and what was then called "sentiment," easily moved to tears. In those days, and for nearly a century afterwards, there was what I may call a lachrymose school, which was weeping on every occasion where anything touching presented itself or could be found. He was not of this school, and hardly knew of its existence ; yet the words of his dear and beautiful Emmeline brought the

moisture into his eyes; and he turned to the window that no one might mark what he considered a weakness.

The other letter contained merely a few lines from Mrs. Culpepper; but they were not of much significance, merely informing him that Sir John Newark was lodged in the Tower to await trial, that the accompanying epistle had come from the Lady Emmeline, together with the letters addressed to Mr. Richard Newark, and that she herself, Mrs. Culpepper, was most anxious to hear of his proceedings, pointing out at the same time the boy who brought the letters as one whose wit and conduct justified the fullest confidence.

In the mean while, Richard Newark had opened the two letters addressed to himself, which were both in his father's hand, and had been written evidently under the idea that they might be opened and read before they were forwarded. The first was dated Exeter, and contained but

a few lines, which were to the following effect :

“ MY DEAR SON,

“ I beseech you, as soon as you receive these, to set out and join me without any delay. Should I be removed from Exeter before your arrival, you will easily gain intelligence of where I am, along the road. Follow quick, and delay not as you value the love of

“ Your affectionate father,

“ JOHN NEWARK.”

The second letter was more in detail, and in not so mild a tone. It told the young gentleman that his father was detained a prisoner in the Tower, that his cousin Emmeline was lodging in the neighbourhood, desiring an opportunity of serving her uncle and guardian, and that she required protection and assistance in her desolate and solitary course. Sir John then

went on to say, clearly with a view of conveying his complete submission and attachment to the government, that he had heard, with great pain, a rumour that his son had taken part with those who were attempting to subvert the existing government, and establish the sway of *the Pretender*; and he went on to command him, on his duty to his father, to separate himself from all such rash and disloyal persons, and immediately make the best of his way to London, taking up his abode in the house which had been engaged for his cousin Emmeline.

Richard Newark concluded the reading of his letters with one of his wild laughs, and then turned his look to Smeaton, who was still standing in the window, with his eyes fixed upon the lines he had received from Emmeline.

“ Well, noble Earl,” said the lad, “ what news have you ?”

Smeaton beckoned him up, and, with a sudden determination, put Emmeline’s letter in his hand.

Richard Newark started at the first words ; and his cheek became somewhat pale. For the moment he went no farther, but laid his finger on the line—" My beloved husband." He said nothing ; but his look was a question ; and Smeaton answered—" Even so, Richard." At the same time, he slightly raised his finger and looked towards the other side of the room, where Somerville, or William Newark, was seated, fondling the hilt of his sword, and observing everything while he affected to observe nothing. Richard caught Smeaton's hand in his own, and wrung it hard, saying, in a low voice :

" I am sorry I have dragged you into this thing. You should have gone after her.—You can go even now."

" Impossible, Richard," replied Smeaton, in the same low tone ; " but *you* can ; and you must. My station, my age, my name, my family, all forbid me to quit this cause when I have once embarked in it. Such is not the case with you. Emmeline requires protection, assistance, and support.

To you I trust her in the fullest and most implicit confidence ; and I beseech you to fly to her and to give her that aid which I cannot—I must not—attempt to afford."

"No, no," cried Richard, aloud, with a laugh, "no, no!" And then suddenly breaking off, he exclaimed : "But you promised to introduce me to a relation, noble Earl. Confer the favor, I beseech you. I am poor in such things. I have but one father and a cousin in my purse ; and I am avaricious of more wealth."

Smeaton put away his letters, and introduced his young companion to William Newark, begging Richard to get hold of their Quartermaster and find good quarters for their visitor.

Richard suffered his cousin to shake him by the hand, but eyed him still like a shy fiery horse, glancing askance at the approach of an unskilful rider. The other, however, was all ease and self-possession, rejoiced exceedingly, as he said, to see his young cousin, spoke with expressions of regret of Sir John's confinement in the

Tower, and cursed the chance which deprived the cause of so strong an arm and so skilful a head.

He then began to talk of his quarters, and Richard led him away to seek them with an air which he seemed to think very satisfactory, but which Smeaton, who knew the lad better, judged to be anything but an indication of amicable feelings towards his new-found friend. The young nobleman's thoughts, however, were soon engrossed in other matters ; for Emmeline's letter re-awakened many a pleasant, many a painful train of reflections ; and he gave himself up to memories for more than half an hour, before he turned his steps towards the quarters of General Forster.

CHAPTER VII.

IT is wonderful how rapidly Somerville, as he called himself, gained to all appearance upon the good opinion of his young cousin. They became quite intimate. Richard found out for him a very comfortable room, sat and talked gaily with him for more than an hour, and then left him with a promise to come and sup with him *tête-à-tête* that night, that they might talk over matters of family interest.

Quarters had not been procured for William Newark too soon ; for hardly an hour had passed ere a troop of some seventy men entered the town, headed by a person named Douglas, whom good old Mr. Robert Patten terms a gentleman, but who, nevertheless, followed the ardent and honourable occupation of horse-stealing upon the border. In the bustle and confusion which attended the congregation of a body of between three and four hundred men, most of them calling themselves gentlemen, in the small town of Rothbury—little farther communication took place between Richard Newark and the Earl of Eskdale. They met once ; and Smeaton thought fit to give his young friend a hint in regard to the character of his cousin.

“ He was always wild, rash, and intemperate,” he said, “ yet with a great deal of shrewdness, which deprived him of one excuse for the commission of follies. He cannot be said to have committed any from

mere thoughtlessness ; and I do not think that your father feels at all well disposed towards him."

"Doubtless," replied Richard ; "nor do I. I don't like that cut upon his forehead. It is an ugly gash, resembling the one you gave the fellow at the back of Ale Head, when they were carrying away Emmy. It is quite as well to mark a friend that we may know him again. I don't think your handwriting on that fellow's head can be mistaken."

" You let in light upon me," said Smeaton, gravely ; "and, if your suspicion is correct, I think him more than ever to be avoided."

" To be watched, noble friend—to be watched," returned Richard, with a laugh. "I am the best watchman in the world. I recollect waiting three hours without moving hand or foot—I don't think I winked an eye—watching with my cross-bow for a hare, till Miss Puss came out, hopping,

on her hind legs, with her ears up and her whiskers wagging ; and I hit my mark. People call me wild and foolish ; but I can always watch and make something of it—and I *will* watch now."

The concluding words were said with peculiar emphasis ; and the moment he had uttered them, he turned away and plunged into a little crowd which had gathered round the last comers.

It was night when the two cousins sat down to their supper together, which William Newark had taken care to make as good and plentiful as the circumstances would permit. He had even contrived—Heaven knows how—to get two or three flagons of tolerable wine ; but he did not show at first, any inclination to drink deep, and began the conversation with topics very different from those which chiefly occupied his thoughts.

"Our numbers are swelling," he said, as soon as the servants had put the food upon the table and retired. "That was a

large troop which came in this morning ; and I saw a whole crowd of foot mounting the white cockade."

" Oh, yes, replied Richard Newark. " The horse were a goodly body : thieves, sheep-stealers, smugglers, cattle-lifters, all well to do in the world, and expert in their professions. Take care of your purse, cousin of mine, if you have got one ; for transfer is easy amongst gentlemen of that class. As for the infantry, poor men, they only come in for disappointment. It is wonderful how much more zeal than discretion there is in infauntry. If soldiers were only things to be fired at and not to fire again, we should have had one of the best equipped armies of infantry in the world by this time. Thousands have come in with a sweet petition for arms ; and, though they have been daily sent away with the assurance that we have no arms to give them, they still march in, offering their services."

" I should think arms would be easily

procured from your western side of the country," observed Somerville. " You are so near the coast of France, and have such excellent places for landing them."

" Ale Bay, for instance," added Richard, with a sharp look, and then a laugh. " Ay, but the worst of it is, Cousin Bill, that the people at Ale are always watching for something or another ; and he would be a cunning man who could land without being caught. . My father knows that, or he would not have lived there so long."

" Ay, he cannot choose where he lives now, poor fellow," responded William Newark ; " but I should think he would be somewhat uneasy at leaving our fair cousin, Emily, there.—Take some wine, Richard."

" Emmeline, Emmeline," cried Richard, pouring out for himself some wine, " not Emily ; how ignorant you are ! But he is not at all uneasy about leaving her there, because he has taken her with him." And he laughed quite like a fool.

" Taken 'her to the Tower !' exclaimed

his cousin. "I did not know they would receive a prisoner's family with him."

"Nor I either," replied Richard ; "but they have *not* received her : she lives near with the servants and people ; and my father took her to keep her out of harm's way. I have often heard him say that, if he had anything he wished to keep secret and snug, London was the place for the purpose. Now Emmeline is just in that case ; and therefore you see he acts upon principle. Oh, he has a head ; has he not ? The Hanover people won't get it off so easily as they imagine ; for he knows how to take care of it, as well as how to use it."

"Ay, doubtless," said the other. "And so the lady lives near the Tower, does she ?"

"In good sooth," answered Richard, in somewhat of a mocking tone. "But what matters that to you, cousin of mine ? It is a long way from this place to London. If you had a telescope, you could not see her."

"That would depend upon its strength," replied William Newark, "although, as I know not rightly where she lives, I could not well point it. In what street does she dwell ? I know London thoroughly."

He spoke in an easy, indifferent tone, judging that the lad would readily betray the place of Emmeline's abode, and making no allowance whatever for that shrewdness which is often joined to great simplicity.

"Oh, Heaven knows," replied Dick. "It is in some street, and the street has got a name ; but what that name is has passed from my noddle these six hours ; and the letters, as in duty bound, I put into the fire.

"Ha ! you have had letters, have you ?" exclaimed his cousin. "Who were they from, and what news did they give you ?"

"They were from my father," replied Richard, "and gave me no news whatever, but merely commanded me to leave off soldiering, and go to London directly.'

William Newark paused, and meditated for a moment or two, while Richard watched his countenance, keenly and searchingly, but with no more appearance of interest than if he had been marking the progress of a shadow on the wall. He saw a variation in the expression of his cousin's face ; and, in truth, a total change had come over his plans. But Richard said nothing, quietly leaving the other to develope his own purposes.

"Do you know, Richard," said William Newark, at length, "I think your father is very much in the right in ordering you to join him in London, both on your account and his own. Your staying here in arms might damage him very much, and even bring his head to the block."

"Indeed !" ejaculated Richard. "What! cut off the father's head for the son's fault ? That is reversing the line of succession, I think, and is neither heraldry nor justice."

"It sometimes happens, however," answered his cousin ; "and the people will

naturally say, that you would never have joined the insurrection, being so young, if your father had not prepared you to do so. Therefore, if you love your father, and would save his life, you had better do as he bids you : I might say indeed, if you love yourself, and would save your own life, you would do so."

"I don't much care about my life," replied Dick ; "but I have some small notion of honour."

"There is no honour to be got here," replied the other. "I am a man of honour too, and would cut any man's throat who said I was not ; but I intend to leave these people, and that very speedily. Between you and me, Dick, there is neither honour, profit, nor safety to be had here. This insurrection will not succeed. Here are two generals with mighty armies of three or four hundred men ; and neither the Englishman nor the Scotchman has the slightest knowledge of military matters. Kenmure and Forster are two quiet country gentle-

men, who never saw a shotted canon fired in their lives. They will get all who follow them into some horrid scrape, where you will be able to do nothing but hold out your hands for the King's troops to come and tie them. There will be disgrace, and ruin, and punishment. If there was a chance—if their own folly in appointing incapable country gentlemen to command in military operations did not deprive the cause of all likelihood—if we were going to fight like men instead of being trapped like sparrows, which will certainly be the end of it—I would let no danger daunt me. But as it is, Dick, I fairly tell you I shall march for London. You may do as you like."

His cousin's words were evidently not palatable to Richard Newark, who sat, gloomy and silent for a minute or two, with his eyes bent upon the table, saying nothing, till his cousin exclaimed, with a laugh—"Come, take some wine, Dick. It will cheer you."

"No," replied Richard, and pushed the

flagon from him. At length he went on, setting his teeth hard—"Well, I will go. I can do them little good, and can be of more service to true-hearted folks there than here. I will go, cousin of mine. When do you set out?"

"Early to-morrow," replied William Newark. "I don't think it needful to tell Kenmure or Forster that, having been accustomed to serve under generals, I do not like to be commanded by bumpkins. I can write all those sweet things afterwards."

"I must tell Eskdale, however," said Richard Newark. "I cannot leave him without explanation."

"Take my advice, and do not say a word," answered his cousin. "He will only try to persuade you to remain by arguments you should not listen to."

"Not he," cried Richard Newark, with a scoff. "All his arguments go the other way. He has never ceased teasing me to go to London after my father, and to take

care of Emmeline, and all that. However, I'll consider of it."

"Indeed!" exclaimed William Newark, in evident surprise at what he heard of the young Earl's conduct; and then he bit his lips to prevent himself smiling while he thought, "What a set of fools these people are! Surely one good head would be a match for a thousand of them."

Conceit is always an adjunct to cunning, and indeed is that adjunct which most frequently renders fruitless the dexterity of its companion. William Newark was mistaken in his calculations of Richard Newark's character; and, though every now and then he felt some misgivings from certain sharp turns of expression used by his young relation, he could not divest his mind of the idea that Richard was a mere pliable and eccentric boy, whom he could soon find means to twist into any shape he pleased. "I will use him as a tool," he thought, "to work my own purposes; but I must make haste. While

his shrewd father remains in the Tower the stage is clear for me to play what part I please. Once let him get out, and I may meet with more than my match."

Richard Newark would drink no more wine, and soon after rose to return to his own quarters. He promised his cousin, however, to be ready to ride with him early on the following morning, with the full resolution of keeping his word. When he got beyond the door, however, he laughed aloud and muttered, "Egad! What a fine thing it is to be called a fool! Men are always showing you their plans when they think you cannot make any use of the knowledge. Master William, you want watching; and you shall have it. I will be your shadow till I see you safe beyond the seas again. Ha, ha! The fool thinks to get hold of Emmeline, not knowing she is another man's wife already. He shall find himself mistaken."

With these thoughts he walked slowly to his own quarters, debating with himself

whether he should tell Smeaton of his intentions. It was more in accordance with his character to set out without communicating with any one ; but still his heart was kind and affectionate ; and, when he reflected upon the pleasure it would give to Emmeline to receive a letter from her husband, he soon made up his mind. He found the young Earl seated quietly in his room, and alone ; and a long conversation took place between them which I need not dwell upon here. Richard, indeed, did not tell his friend all his motives for the step he was about to take. He did not even mention that William Newark was to be the companion of his journey. He had no skill in explanations, and very often found it difficult to explain the motives of his actions to himself, rarely if ever attempting it to others ; and in this instance he would have been obliged to enter into long details from which he shrank.

For his part, the Earl felt a sensation of relief and thankfulness, not easy

to be described, when he heard Richard's resolution. To see the kind-hearted lad placed beyond the perils attending upon a desperate enterprise and a hopeless cause, would have afforded in itself much matter for rejoicing ; but to know that Emmeline, in the difficulties and discomforts which surrounded her, would have the support and assistance of one so affectionate, true, and honest, took a great part of the heavy load from his heart. The conversation naturally turned to his marriage with Emmeline, in regard to which Richard evidently entertained some curiosity ; and Smeaton succinctly detailed to him the whole facts, sparing the name of his father as much as possible. He then applied himself to write to Emmeline in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of any evil result, if the letter should fall into the hands of others ; and, having done so, he committed it to the charge of his young companion, and bade him good

night, never doubting that he should see him on the following morning.

The fatigues which Smeaton had undergone during the four preceding days made him exceed his usual period of rest by a few minutes ; but, on rising, he found, to his surprise, that Richard had been gone more than an hour.

CHAPTER VIII.

MANY men were in the Jacobite army, both in the south and in the north, who, judging of the future by the present, and by the appointment of the most incompetent persons to offices of high command, clearly foresaw that a catastrophe of a dark and terrible kind must await the insurrection. That catastrophe, however, as far as the little body collected in the south was concerned, was now approaching with great rapidity.

I shall not trust to my own pen

for the details of all that occurred during the next few days, but will merely abridge, and render a little more clear, the account of an eye-witness who shared in all the perils of the time, but contrived in the end, by a timely recantation and abundant testimony against his companions, to slip his own neck out of the halter into which he aided to place theirs.

Up to the time indicated in the last chapter, General Forster, as he was somewhat ludicrously called, and the gentlemen who accompanied him, had entertained sanguine hopes of being able, after their junction with Lord Kenmure, to surprise the important town of Newcastle-upon-Tyne ; but, before the evening of the eighteenth of October ended, all such expectations were dispelled by the intelligence that General Carpenter, a man of great experience and decision, had thrown himself into Newcastle with one regiment of foot and three regiments of dragoons. This was a force which they

had no means of opposing successfully, and great anxiety was felt for the junction of the Scotch troops. That junction was effected on the morning of the nineteenth, in an open piece of heathy ground, broken by the remains of what was once an extensive wood, and known as Rothbury Forest.

With no slight eagerness, the two forces examined each other as they approached ; and, if the gentlemen of Northumberland felt some disappointment at the scantiness of Kenmure's numbers, the Scotch gentlemen experienced, perhaps, more at seeing their English friends so ill provided with horses and arms. Lord Kenmure's little force, consisting of four squadrons of horse, certainly displayed much more the appearance of a royal army on a miniature scale than the irregular body of the Northumbrians. Armed with good stout broad-swords, and mounted on strong sinewy horses, they advanced with trumpets sounding and colours displayed ; and

surrounded by a chosen body of gentlemen, was borne what they called the standard of King James, formed of blue silk richly embroidered with the arms of Scotland on one side and the thistle on the other, while long streamers of white ribbon hung from the corners, likewise embroidered in gold with the words—"For our wronged King and oppressed country." "For our lives and liberties."

The whole force when united made at this period a body of about six hundred men ; and, a hasty council being called, it was determined immediately to march towards Wooler as preparatory to a retreat into Scotland, which had now become inevitable. It was much to be feared, indeed, that General Carpenter would not suffer them to effect this object ; but, happily for them, the intelligence that Brigadier Macintosh with a large body of Highlanders had crossed the Frith of Forth, and was in full march for the south, had reached that distinguished officer and Lord Kenmure simul-

taneously ; and, unable to obtain exact information as to Macintosh's strength or line of march, Carpenter judged it inexpedient to leave so important a place as Newcastle without other defence than the somewhat doubtful loyalty of the inhabitants. From Wooler, the insurgent force marched straight towards Kelso, seizing arms wherever they could find them, and also appropriating to themselves any public money they could lay hands on.

About the middle of the day, however, they all halted on a wild moor a few miles from the town, having received information that it was occupied by Sir William Bennet of Grubbet, with a considerable force—that the streets were barricaded, and several pieces of cannon placed in position. It was soon discovered, however, that Sir William Bennet, who was only supported by a body of militia, had taken fright at their approach and quitted the town, leaving some store of arms and ammunition behind him. Intelligence was

also brought that Macintosh and his Highlanders were advancing rapidly from Dunse; and it was accordingly determined to march to Kelso at once, both in order to join their friends, and to possess themselves of the arms which Bennet had left behind him.

The Scotch cavalry passed through the town without halting, in order to meet their Highland friends at Ednam Bridge; but the Northumbrian gentlemen remained in Kelso, which had been appointed as the general place of rendezvous. The expectation of finding any great store of the munitions of war, were disappointed; for nothing appeared except some small pieces of cannon taken from Hume Castle, a trifling quantity of gunpowder, and a number of good serviceable broad-swords which had been concealed in the church, and which proved a great relief to the half-armed Northumbrian troops. A short time after, Macintosh and the Highlanders

entered the town, with their bag-pipes playing, and the sturdy, old veteran, who commanded them, marching at their head. The forces now assembled, consisted of some fifteen hundred infantry and six hundred cavalry ; and many a good citizen of Kelso, who had not yet dared to avow his attachment to the House of Stuart, now shouted loudly for King James, adding thereunto, much outcry against the obnoxious measures of the House of Hanover.

“ No malt tax ! no Union ! no salt tax !” was vociferated by several hundred voices ; but the worthy citizens confined themselves to words, keeping cautiously clear of any overt acts.

The following day, being Sunday, was spent in religious observance ; and on the Monday, the whole troops being drawn up in the market-place, King James III. was proclaimed with great solemnity, and a lengthy manifesto read, sufficient to tire the patience of the best disposed. Not con-

tent with dealing more in words than actions, the insurgent force continued idle in Kelso till the Thursday following, wasting the three most precious days which were granted to them, in the whole course of the insurrection. The troops of General Carpenter were fatigued and discouraged ; his numbers were inferior to their own ; the whole south of Scotland was open to them ; and every inducement, combined with opportunity, to lead them in an active and energetic course.

But division was in their councils. One proposed that they should cross the Tweed and boldly attack Carpenter's force before it had recovered from long and frequent marches ; another strongly urged to march to the westward in order to join the western clans, and with their aid, attack Dumfries and Glasgow, threatening the flank and rear of the Duke of Argyle's army, while Mar attacked him in the front. The English gentlemen, on the contrary, strongly advocated

a sudden and rapid incursion into England, declaring their conviction that multitudes would rise and join them as they passed through Lancashire, while Carpenter, with his wearied and harassed forces, would be unable to follow, or might easily be defeated if he did. Every officer of any experience, opposed this insane suggestion ; but, nevertheless, it prevailed ; and each day brought over fresh converts to that opinion from amongst the thoughtless and inexperienced.

It would seem that no decision had been arrived at, when they marched for Jedburgh on Thursday the twenty-seventh of October ; and hesitation and some symptoms of panic were very evident on the way. Twice or thrice, an alarm of the enemy being upon them created great confusion, ending in merriment when they discovered that parties of their own troops were the cause of all their apprehensions. At Jedburgh a halt of two days took place ; and here the fatal

resolution of entering England was adopted. An unexpected difficulty, however, arose. The Highlanders—at the suggestion, it is supposed, of the Earl of Wintoun, who was highly popular with them—piled their arms, and refused positively to march out of their own country.

After long discussions, they were persuaded to proceed as far as Hawick ; and indecision again appeared in the councils of the leaders. The opinion of the wiser party had gained strength by the resolute opposition of the Highlanders, and so far prevailed, that a considerable party of horse was detached towards Dumfries, with the promise of being followed by the whole of the army. Hardly had this body departed, however, when another change of resolution took place. The English gentlemen received, or pretended to have received, dispatches from Lancashire, assuring them of the support of twenty thousand men ; and an immediate march into

England was determined. Messengers were sent to recall the party which had been detached to Ecclesfechan ; but the great difficulty still remained with the Highlanders, who once more positively refused to cross the border. Persuasions, entreaties, and even bribes, as it is said, were urged upon both leaders and men, and proved so far successful that a considerable body at length agreed to march. More than five hundred, however, adhered to their first resolution, and, separating into small parties, abandoned the army and took their way homeward by the west. The other diminished body of the insurgents marched on towards Carlisle by Langholm and Longtown, gaining here and there a few volunteers, and hearing rumours of parties of the enemy's cavalry hovering about them in different directions. Money, which was much wanted, was gained at several places by the confiscation of the public revenues ; but the people in general looked upon the progress of the Jacobites with

indifference ; and no signs for some time appeared of any general movement in favour of the Stuart cause.

After crossing the border, Forster assumed the command of the whole army in virtue of a commission from the Earl of Mar ; and, wisely judging that Carlisle, though but poorly garrisoned, was too strong for his small force he marched to Brampton and thence advanced towards Penrith, where a bloodless triumph awaited him over a body of men collected to oppose his march. The Lord Lonsdale, strongly attached to the cause of the House of Hanover, and, though still very young, a man of courage and decision, had collected a considerable body of the horse-militia of Westmoreland and Lancashire, and added to it the *posse comitatus* of the shire. He was strenuously aided by the Bishop of Carlisle ; and the numbers collected at a little distance to the northward of Penrith, amounted to no less than fourteen thousand men.

This undisciplined mob was drawn up on a small moor across which the insurgent army was likely to pass, with some woody lanes and broken ground at a little distance in the front. Intelligence of their proceedings had reached the insurgent leaders, but they resolutely marched on, prepared and eager for battle. The Highlanders, it would seem, were the first who issued from the lanes ; but they did so in good order, and immediately extended themselves in battle array. The cavalry followed ; but the very sight of anything like a disciplined army was sufficient to overthrow all confidence in the *posse comitatus* ; the spirit of flight seized on them all ; arms were thrown away in haste ; and the whole country was speedily covered with the flying multitude. Lord Lonsdale, left with a few of his own servants, was forced to take refuge in Appleby Castle ; and the Bishop of Carlisle was hotly pursued on his road to Rose Castle by a worthy belligerent clergyman,

who had formerly been a curate in his diocese.

The flight and utter dispersion of the enemy gave great encouragement to the insurgents ; and the spoils of the field supplied them with many articles of which they stood in great need. Arms, horses, and powder were taken in considerable quantities ; and they entered Penrith the same day in good order, and flushed with success. They were very civilly received in the town ; and further stores, as well as a considerable sum of money, were obtained. After refreshing themselves for a day at Penrith, the insurgents moved on to Appleby, without receiving any of the reinforcements which they expected. On the contrary, indeed, it would seem, that many desertions took place ; for no great confidence was entertained by the men in their commanders, and little obedience shown except in moments of urgent danger.

From Appleby to Kendal, and thence

to Kirby Lonsdale, they marched on unopposed ; but neither from Westmoreland nor Cumberland did they receive any of the reinforcements they expected, till on their march from the latter place towards Lancaster. Here, however, they were joined by a number of the Roman Catholic gentry, and were farther encouraged by the news from Lancashire, which represented the whole county as ready to rise and join them. Manchester, then comparatively an insignificant little town, but somewhat famous for the unruly disposition of its inhabitants, declared for King James, with very little reserve, and began to raise and arm bodies of men for his service. Lancaster, however, had well nigh proved a stumbling block in their way ; for Colonel Chartres, and some other officers attached to the House of Hanover, were anxious to take measures for its defence, and even proposed to blow up the bridge. The fears, however, and, perhaps, the disaffection of the ma-

jority of the inhabitants, frustrated all their designs ; and, marching into the town, the insurgents possessed themselves not only of money, arms, and ammunition, but also of six pieces of cannon, which they found in a ship belonging to so peaceable a personage as a Quaker.

These cannon were speedily mounted upon wheels ; and during the stay of the insurgent force, which was from the seventh to the ninth of November, small parties of gentlemen continually came in, unhappily for themselves, and joined in an enterprise which was now fast tending to a disastrous conclusion. It must be said, however, that they aided greatly to hurry the catastrophe. During the whole of the long march from Jedburgh to Lancaster, the leaders of the insurrection, as may well be supposed, had been anxious to obtain information of the movements of the enemy's troops. General Carpenter's small corps was that which they principally dreaded ; and we are assured that Forster spared neither money

no exertion to gain intelligence. It was known that Carpenter had immediately pursued the insurgent force as soon as he learned their line of march ; but he was reported to be at a considerable distance in their rear ; and a certain Mr. Paul, another Jacobite clergyman, who had doffed the cassock to assume military costume, brought positive intelligence into Lancaster that General Carpenter was at Barnard's Castle in Durham with men and horses sorely fatigued. The other Lancashire gentlemen, who came in from time to time, assured Forster and his companions that no body of King George's troops could approach within forty miles without their receiving intelligence of it ; and, in an evil hour, it was determined to waste more time in Lancaster merely as a resting-place, even after the plan had been decided upon for advancing into a district where a great accession of force was to be expected.

That plan was generally as follows ; viz., to march direct upon Manchester, where

the cause of the House of Stuart had numerous partizans, to seize upon Warrington Bridge, and to extend their operations to Liverpool, of which they hoped easily to make themselves masters. Orders were even given, it is said, for advancing at once ; but the acquisition of cannon, and the rumours from the country, rendered them somewhat apathetic ; so that from Monday the seventh, till Wednesday the ninth, of November, they remained refreshing themselves in Lancaster, while the forces of their adversaries were drawing closer and closer around them. The seventh proved a very wet and stormy day ; but the march towards Preston was begun early in the morning ; and it would seem that some misgivings began to be entertained regarding the intelligence which had been received from the country. Rumours spread through the small force, that large bodies of King George's troops were being collected to oppose their advance ; and the necessity of taking up a position which would enable all

their friends in the midland and western counties to join them, was felt, but too late.

The roads were bad, and rendered nearly impassable by torrents of rain ; the infantry struggled on, fatigued and somewhat disheartened ; and even the cavalry found it difficult to advance in anything like order. Accordingly, at the small town of Garstang, it was determined that the foot-soldiers should halt for the night, while the cavalry pushed on for Preston, and dislodged a small body of dragoons quartered in that place. The dragoons did not pause to be attacked, but marched out at the approach of the insurgents, who rejoiced as for a victory, and took up their quarters in the town. On the following day, Thursday, the tenth of November, the whole of General Forster's force was re-united in Preston ; and the usual ceremonies of proclaiming King James III., and praying for him, by name, in the church, took place.

At Preston another delay occurred. No intelligence of the enemy's proximity was received ; and, instead of marching upon Manchester on the Friday morning, as had been first determined, a halt was resolved upon until Saturday. During the whole of Friday, the insurgents enjoyed themselves in Preston with a feeling of the utmost security ; and it was not till the troops were under arms on Saturday, that any intimation was received of the rapid advance of General Wills upon Preston.

CHAPTER IX

IT was during the evening of the ninth of November, on which the cavalry of the insurgent army marched into Preston, that a party consisting of three mounted men followed the course of one of the small deep lanes, of which there are several in that part of the country. The cavalry was proceeding in the same direction by a wider road to the right ; and one of the horsemen of whom I have spoken, lost no opportunity of getting upon any elevated

spot, in order either to descry their course of march, or to study the features of the country. Wherever the banks of the lane sloped down and showed a way to higher ground, wherever a gate gave exit to the right or left, that horseman passed through, and gazed about him. The two others were less watchful, and seemed contented enough with the shelter of the lane. One of them was tall and not very well made, riding his horse in a slovenly and slouching manner ; the other fat and short, not the most graceful cavalier in the world, but one who showed a very discreet adherence to the saddle.

The rain poured down in torrents ; the mud was up to the horses' fetlocks ; and a cold, cutting wind blew the half congealed drops into the travellers necks and ears, notwithstanding an ample garniture of cloaks, with collars raised high and fastened tight before. It was as miserable an evening for a journey as could well be conceived ; nevertheless, the latter of the

two who remained in the lane, contrived to keep his companion in a merry humour, eliciting frequent peals of laughter from him, partly at the matter of his anecdotes, partly at the manner of the narrator.

"Ay," he observed, with a strong Scotch accent—"ay, Mr. Van Noost, you are doubtless a very clever man in your way, and pretty gods and goddesses, shepherds and shepherdesses, you can make out of cold lead, as you tell me. But I can do more than that."

"I don't doubt it, my lord," replied Van Noost, chuckling a little at the idea, notwithstanding. "You are a great man, and I am a very insignificant one; yet I should not mind working against your lordship for a wager as to who should cast the best Diana."

"Let her alone, man, let her alone," said Lord Wintoun, with a laugh. "Keep to Venus; you may beat me there. I should beat you at Dianas; for I should

cast them in cold iron suited to such a hard-hearted goddess. Lead is the fitter stuff to make Venus of ; for we all know that she was every now and then in the melting mood. Why, man, if these fellows, who call themselves generals, and have no more knowledge of war than my nag, would but give me a leathern apron and a sledge-hammer, I could do them more service than they'll ever let me do them at the head of a regiment. In the one case, I could make them pikes to arm the common people ; but in the other, I have the command of a regiment, as it is called, which is to obey everybody but me."

Van Noost's curiosity was excited, but not by the most important part of Lord Wintoun's reply.

" Why, my lord," he said, " how came your lordship to learn such a trade as making pike-heads ?"

" It came by nature and a little observation," replied the Earl. " You see, dearly beloved Van Noost, I thought it just as

well at one time to travel ; and I had a strong inclination to see more of the world than the lords and ladies in it, which, after all, are like a sheaf of arrows, all cut to one length and tricked out in the same manner. So I put by my dignity for the time being, dressed myself up as a blacksmith's boy, got a place with one of the dingy craft, and engaged to blow the bellows."

Van Noost burst into a loud laugh, observing :

" You soon got tired of that, my Lord, I dare say ?"

" Not I," rejoined Lord Wintoun. " I blew bellows and hammered iron for two whole years ; ate pumpkin soup, drank sour wine, and cooked my own omelette for a treat on Sundays."

Van Noost laughed again, thinking he would rather not have partaken his Lordship's fare ; but Lord Wintoun went on, saying :

" Nay, more, I took many a buffet from the blacksmith's daughter, with a

patience which might have lessened Job ; and one time his wife would have basted me with a broom, but I took up a red-hot horse-shoe and threatened to set fire to her petticoats, though they were too short in all conscience to suffer much curtailment decently. The good woman laughed, like a merry soul as she was, and laid down the broom while I quenched the horse-shoe."

"Perhaps the daughter was the attraction," said Van Noost, slyly. "Did she give nothing but buffets, my noble Lord ?"

"Faith, nothing to me," replied Lord Wintoun ; "and, as to attractions, those which she had were more vast in extent than peculiar in power. She was well nigh as big as her father ; and, though she had two great black eyes, they were not much better than one ; for they drew to a point so close towards her nose, that it was like a cross fire from the angles of a fortress ; and, if she saw anything at a distance, I am sure it must have been reversed. Then her mouth !—Heaven and

earth, her mouth ! The very memory is painful. When it was shut even, it looked like what we Scotchmen call a slit in a haggiss ; and, when it was open, it looked like the entrance of the bottomless pit. It could never have been borne, had not the nose counterbalanced it."

Again Van Noost laughed heartily, exclaiming :

" The love ! The joy ! What happiness your Lordship must have had in her dainty society ! "

" Good faith, I have fared worse than I did there," said Lord Wintoun, " and, I fear me, shall fare worse still. A man without a head is of no use to himself or any one else, Master Van Noost ; and I doubt that I shall long have one upon my shoulders. How does yours feel ? Is it shaky ? "

" Not very easy, my good Lord," replied Van Noost, in a dolorous tone. " At times a certain sick qualm comes over my stomach, as if I had eaten half-cooked

pork. But does your Lordship really think the case so bad?"

"As bad as it can be," answered Lord Wintoun. "Take my word for it, Van, your fat will soon be as cold and hard as one of your own leaden figures, unless you contrive to be politic."

"But what would you have me do?" inquired the poor statuary. "I think things seem going well enough for my part."

"Poor man!" ejaculated Lord Wintoun. "You have eyes, doubtless, for the heads of your statues, but none it seems for your own. However, here comes your pet, Lord Eskdale. Ask him. What do you think he is galloping about the country for, up on the top of this knoll and over that hill, and through the other gate, or leaping his weary horse over a fence like a cat through a window?—You don't know? I'll tell you then. He is looking out to see if he can perceive, through all this rain, the enemy's troops, which he knows will

be upon us before three days are over. He is not to be fooled, like your Forster and Kenmure, with the fancy that we shall be allowed to march through the land at our leisure.—Well, Eskdale, do you see them?"

"It is hardly possible to see at all," replied the young Earl; "but I see nothing except our own men on the right, and the church of Preston, I suppose, a few miles off."

"What do you think Carpenter is doing?" asked Lord Wintoun.

"In truth, I do not know," returned Smeaton; "probably marching after us till he knows he has us in a net, ready to fall upon us the moment it is advisable. We shall make a good fight of it, though, I doubt not; for most of these gentlemen have strong hearts, if not strong heads,"

"Ay, the garret story is very empty," said Lord Wintoun. "Do tell this good poor man, Eskdale, why you have refused all command in our great army."

"Simply, because I would not have any responsibility," returned Smeaton, "in an enterprise which is destined to end in misfortune and disgrace. There is no officer of experience whom I would not have served under, in whatever capacity he chose to assign me. But Mr. Forster, though a very good country gentleman, I dare say, is no soldier ; and it requires fully as much skill and experience, my noble friend, to command an army as to cut out a wooden spoon. Any one who may attempt either without some practice, will cut his fingers and spoil his work."

"Then, my good Lord, why do you not leave them ?" interrogated Van Noost, with a very unpleasant choking sensation about the throat. "Here is this noble Earl of Wintoun trying hard to persuade me that it would be better for me to run."

"Faith, Van Noost, I think he is right," replied Smeaton, with a smile, adding, in a half-joking manner—"The difference is

very great between you and us, Van Noost. You see, as you are fully as broad as both of us, you run a double risk of musket bullets. Besides, if we should be taken, great men can find friends to pray for them. Now, who would pray for you, I know not, but your cook and your garden shepherdesses. Seriously, however, with all the zeal in the world, I don't think you can do much good here to the cause, and none to yourself ; and, if you would take my advice, you would ride away, surrender yourself to some magistrate, submit to penance for yoursins, and save your body from Carpenter's-carving knives or your neck from a hempen cravat. Our honour keeps us here ; but you have not much honour to gain by staying with us ; and, in the circumstances, can lose little by leaving us. I give you my word that, had I not been burdened with an Earl's title, I would have left the force the moment that the mad determination of marching into England was taken. I am not bound to serve under lunatics ; but it

would give too severe a shock to the cause for two noblemen suddenly to abandon it."

"That is what brought me back to Langton," said Lord Wintoun; "for I had fully determined to go, rather than be led to slaughter like a sheep, and that without even the object of my fleece or my flesh. But I asked myself how many would follow my example if I went; and that thought brought me back."

The idea of being led to slaughter like a sheep, did not seem at all palatable to poor Van Noost; and he continued silent and dismal during the remainder of the way. Smeaton took up his quarters with several other gentlemen, forming a part of the little force which they called the gentlemen volunteers who had no separate command, and who served under no particular leader. Some supper was hastily prepared; and all the usual resources of soldiers employed for whiling away anxious thought and making the present pass cheerfully.

The claret-flagon—for, both at Lancaster and Preston, good wine was found—circulated freely amongst the higher classes of the insurgents, while the fiery aid of brandy, either plain, diluted, or made into punch, kept up the spirits of the rest.

Of his favourite beverage, punch, Van Noost, who sat at the same long table as the Earl of Eskdale, drank so much that the young nobleman felt some apprehension lest his salutary terror should pass away, and he should abandon his purpose of quitting the insurgent army and making his submission ; but towards the close of the evening, Van Noost came up to him, and whispered—

“ I shall depart early to-morrow, my good Lord, and go as straight to London as they will let me. Has your Lordship anything to write that I can take charge of ?”

Smeaton was inclined to seize the opportunity eagerly ; but a moment's reflec-

tion showed him that, by giving his humble friend even a single letter, he might endanger the good man's safety, if he should fall into the hands of the enemy. He therefore called him aside, and charged him with a few words to Emmeline. They were sad as well as few ; for his own expectations were all dark and gloomy ; and he did not wish to raise up hopes which he felt certain would be disappointed. He said little more to Van Noost, and that was by way of warning. He urged him strongly to give himself up voluntarily to any magistrate, if he found the least difficulty in making his escape through the country ; to submit unconditionally, but at the same time to avoid making any statements which could either betray the condition of those with whom he had been in companionship, or deprive them of any advantages in the present or the future.

Hethen retired to his chamber, saying he was fatigued, and would seek rest ; but the

rest he took, though he might find bodily repose, was not that of the mind. He slept not at all for the next three hours, but remained seated motionless, near the window, in deep thought.

CHAPTER X.

AT an early hour in the morning of Saturday the eleventh of November, a good deal of bustle and commotion filled the streets of Preston. Private gentlemen and military officers were seen running hither and thither ; and all who had command of regiments or squadrons, as their little bodies of men were called, received a summons to attend a council at General Forster's quarters at the Mitre inn. The Earl of Eskdale was not one of these, however.

He had refused all command, notwithstanding pressing importunities ; for his military skill had been seen and appreciated, even by those who would not follow his advice in the time of action. Nor was he, to say the truth, even up at the hour when this bustle began ; for, as I have shown in the preceding chapter, he had been watchful and sleepless during the greater part of the night ; and, when he did at length lie down to rest, fatigue brought on a deep and lasting slumber, from which all the noises of the awakening town were hardly sufficient to rouse him. He had, it is true, many bitter and painful thoughts to deal with in his waking hours ; but those thoughts had little to do with the conduct of the expedition in which he was engaged ; and over him, as over a great many others who had joined the ill-starred enterprise, had come a sort of hopeless indifference, which left him little care of what might be the next move in the game of folly and madness then being played.

About half past seven, however, his

servant, Higham, entered the room where he slept, with a white and anxious countenance. Smeaton was up and partly dressed ; and, looking quietly in the man's face, he said—

“ Well, Higham, give me my sword. I suppose the Hanover troops are upon us, by your chop-fallen look.”

“ Ah, my lord, God forgive us our sins!” exclaimed the man. “ It will come to fighting this time ; for they say that General Wills, with ten thousand men, is marching upon Preston, and can already be seen from the top of the windmill.”

“ I suppose you do not object to the fighting, Higham,” said his lord. “ You have always been foremost in brave words, my good friend ; and I shall certainly expect that you now act up to them.”

“ I will do my best, my lord—I will do my best,” replied the servant ; “ but I had rather not be killed just now, if I could help it. I have done a great many wrong things, I am afraid ; and I should much like time to repent.”

"It is not a very long operation," observed Smeaton, with a faint smile, continuing his dressing. "God's grace can give repentance at any time, and render it effectual. A short prayer, my good friend, and a strong resolution to do better for the future, is what I would advise you to make, and then come and fight like a man on the side you have espoused."

"Ah, but, my lord, I have wronged you too," said Higham; "and that is one of the things I would repent of and atone for."

"Well, well," responded Smeaton, "I have no time now to hear confession of sins. I must go and see what is the truth of all this you tell me. As for the rest, I freely forgive you, my good man, for any little offence, known or unknown by me, which you may have committed against me. It is very unlikely that both you and I should come alive out of this day's work, if matters are going as you say; and, which ever is taken, let us part in charity. I forgive you

with all my heart, Higham, for any fault in your duty to me."

"Ah, my Lord!" cried Higham, with a rueful look, "if you knew all—"

He did not conclude his sentence, however; for, at that moment, without any application for admittance, Van Noost burst into the young nobleman's room; and Smeaton, anxious for the good man's safety, made a sign to the servant to leave them together alone.

"Have you heard the news, my Lord, have you heard the news?" cried Van Noost, in a state of great excitement, but without any signs of fear. "General Wills will be here in a few hours, they say."

"So I have heard," rejoined Smeaton; "but, my good friend, I did hope that you were far away before this time."

"I am very glad I was not," said Van Noost, rubbing his hands; "for I have a plan—such a plan!—for the defence of the place, if your Lordship will but propose it to General Forster. It cannot fail. It is sure to succeed."

Smeaton had not always the best opinion of Van Noost's plans ; but the man spoke very earnestly ; and the young nobleman replied with a smile—" Well, Van Noost, tell me what it is ; and, if it seem to me feasible, I will propose it to those in command."

" It is this, my noble lord," replied Van Noost ; " and it must succeed. General Wills is advancing from the side of Wigan with an overwhelming force. In two hours, they tell me, he will be in the town. If we run away and leave it empty, he will pursue us with his cavalry without a minute's delay ; so that we shall all be cut to pieces before we can make our escape. Now, what I should propose is this :—to make an appearance as if the town were defended, even after we are all gone ; for, by seizing the bridge over the Ribble we can delay them for a while."

" That bridge will, of course, be maintained at any cost," remarked Smeaton ; " but, if General Wills is marching from

Wigan, we shall not be able to pass that way without fighting."

"No, my good lord, no," replied Van Noost. "I do not propose to escape that way. Of course it will take some time to reconnoitre the bridge ; but let the men retreat from it into the town and follow the main body which, in the mean time, must be marching down Fishergate Street to the meadows. I have examined all the ground well. There are two good fords for horse or foot across the Ribble. Then the road to Lancaster is open before us ; and we shall have a town which we can defend, or a port from which we can sail."

"I doubt much if you will find that road open now, Van Noost," replied the Earl, "though undoubtedly the possession of those fords is a great object ; but I do not yet see how you will make General Wills imagine the town is defended after we have left it."

"Give me but two hours," replied Van

Noost, "and I will dress you up men of straw, so like Highlanders that you would swear you saw their bare knees."

Smeaton began to laugh.

"Indeed, my good lord," continued Van Noost, somewhat warmly, "the plan is a good one. I could make fifty or sixty of these men, and dispose them in beautiful groups at the ends of the streets. The General would never think of making his attack upon a town apparently defended, without long preparations and skilful dispositions. In the mean time we should be getting to Lancaster."

"No, no, Van Noost," replied Smeaton. "As stuffed men cannot fire muskets, General Wills would not long be deceived. Your idea regarding the defence of Ribble Bridge, and your suggestion to seize the two ferds, are both very good, and I will mention them to General Forster as coming from you ; but spare me the straw Highlanders—And now, my good friend, let me urge you most strongly to take your

departure from this place. Indeed I was in hopes you were gone long ago. Depend upon it, Van Noost, all who remain here are destined either to die in Preston or to be made prisoners. Had we a man of experience and military skill to command us, we might fight successfully, or we might retreat successfully ; but, as it is, there is no hope of either. You are not a fighting man, Van Noost ; you can gain no glory here ; and, if you will take my advice, you will not delay a moment, but ride out of the town as long as the way is clear. And now, farewell, my good friend. I can stay no longer ; for I must go to ascertain what is the exact truth of the reports which have reached me."

As he spoke, he shook his companion kindly by the hand ; and poor Van Noost, with drooping head, and tears in his eyes, walked down with him to the door of the house.

The young nobleman took his way along the street towards the Mitre Inn, observing

the faces of all the persons he met. The streets were very full ; for the news of General Wills's approach had spread rapidly ; and Highland clansmen and night-riding borderers, Lancashire Roman Catholics, and Northumbrian gentlemen, were all hurrying out to gain farther intelligence of the enemy, or to ascertain the plans of their own leaders. Those whom Smeaton actually met, were generally of the inferior class—the common men as they were called ; and he remarked an expression of dogged resolution in their countenances from which he argued well. I mean to say he inferred that their resistance would be obstinate and vigorous, if not successful : so that perhaps good terms might be made, even if a victory could not be won. On entering the Mitre Inn, however, he found a number of gentlemen in the passage, and many more in a front room on the ground floor, who were waiting to hear the result of deliberations which were going on in an upper chamber. Amongst

these he perceived anything but the same looks which he had remarked in the men of inferior station. There was an appearance of discouragement, of doubt, in some instances of apprehension, which was very painful to witness ; and the only one who seemed perfectly at his ease was the Earl of Wintoun, who now took no part in the councils of General Forster. The silence amongst such a multitude of persons was very remarkable ; few spoke at all, and those who did speak raised not their voice above a whisper. The Earl of Wintoun himself sat on an old mahogany stool, playing with his sword, which he held between his knees, and humming a Scotch air with the most perfect appearance of indifference.

“ Well, Eskdale,” he said, as the other approached him, “ have you heard the news ? The Elector’s people are marching from Wigan to attack us, they say.”

“ Then we shall have what might have

been expected long before," replied Smeaton, in a cheerful tone—"some good, hard blows ; and God defend the right!"

"Amen!" ejaculated the Earl. "I wonder what they intend to do. They are a long time in deliberation. But, after all, that may well be ; for, while men of science would see that only one thing is to be done, our good friend, Forster, has the whole world of imagination to go through before he can fix upon a plan. Doubtless it will be something very extraordinary when he does draw the lot by chance."

"Nay, nay, I dare say we shall do very well," replied the young nobleman. "Forster is a brave man ; and I strongly suspect that unconquerable resolution is what will be more serviceable here than anything. Of course, ordinary precautions will be taken ; and it seems to me that much generalship will not be required."

"The men will fight to the death," said a young gentleman of the House of Athol, who was standing near. "If we had but

heads amongst us, we have plenty of hearts." And then, with a knitted brow, and a sharp glance of his eye round the chamber, he added, sternly, "But we will have no trifling, no cowardice."

" Of that I imagine there is little chance," replied Smeaton, coolly. " But here I think are the officers coming down, Captain Murray."

A noise was heard of many feet upon the stairs ; and the next moment Forster himself looked into the room, and, when he saw Lord Wintoun and the young Earl of Eskdale, advanced towards them, followed by several others. His look was cheerful and assured, and his manner composed and courteous.

" We have much needed your advice, my lords," he said ; " and I truly wish you would sometimes join our councils. You have doubtless heard the rumour that General Wills is advancing from Wigan. I can hardly believe the fact, and am now going out with a small party to ascertain

if it be so or not. If it be, I trust we shall give a good account of this general."

"Doubtless," replied Smeaton, calmly. "Is it fair to ask if you have determined upon any plan of resistance?"

"Not fully," replied Forster; "and I shall be glad of any suggestion from your experience, my lord."

"I doubt not, sir," replied Smeaton, "that you will take all requisite precautions, such as securing the fords over the Ribble, and taking possession of Ribble Bridge, which, when I examined it, seemed to me very capable of being converted rapidly into a strong point of defence."

"Ay indeed!" said Forster. "Does not it lie somewhat distant from the town for that purpose?"

"Assuredly," replied the young nobleman, "if you are determined upon making your defence in the town; but the high ground about it, the number of hedges and lanes in the neighbourhood, and many other advantages, afford an excellent posi-

tion behind the bridge for a small army furnished with cannon, and principally consisting of infantry opposed to a larger force, strong in cavalry alone. At all events, there can be no harm in seizing the bridge at once ; for it could be well defended for several hours by a mere handful of men."

"True, that is very true," replied Forster ; "and it shall be done immediately.—Colonel Farquharson of Invercauld, may I ask you to undertake this task, and seize upon Ribble Bridge with one or two companies of foot ?"

The gallant soldier whom he addressed, with hardly a word of reply, left the room to obey the order he had received ; and Forster, after having mused a moment, said, in a loud tone—

"To delay the enemy's advance for a few hours is as good as a victory ; for beyond all doubt, the greater part of the Elector's troops will come over to the army of their real sovereign unless they

are led into battle immediately before they have time for consideration."

This was evidently said for effect ; and it is wonderful at what delusive hopes men will catch in desperate situations. The expectation spread of great desertion from King George's troops as soon as the two forces should be in presence ; and, after pausing for a minute or two more, Forster proceeded to the door of the inn, where his horses were already waiting for him. He took but very few men with him ; and, from amongst all the gentlemen present, his strange choice of a companion fell upon Robert Patten, the clergyman, who, in the military spirit which had seized upon him, acted the part of aide-de-camp throughout that eventful day. The assembly at the Mitre did not altogether break up on his departure ; but to the silence which had pervaded the lower part of the house succeeded a confused and buzzing clamour of many voices, in the midst of which Smeaton and the Earl of Wintoun quietly walked away together.

"We seem to be in a very active but not very industrious state," said Lord Wintoun to his companion, in a quiet, sarcastic tone. "What do you intend to do, Eskdale?"

"I shall order my horse and ride out of the town, to see the state of things with my own eyes," replied the young Earl. "Not very *industrious* indeed! Why, the people are all sauntering about, as if we were waiting for the opening of a fair, and not of a battle."

"A sheep has its throat cut," said Lord Wintoun, "whether it struggles and kicks or not; so perhaps it is best to undergo the operation quietly. You are not going to leave us, I suppose, Eskdale?"

"No, my good lord, no," replied Smeaton. "I will be back in Preston before a shot is fired; but I must say, King James has treated us rather hardly in placing us under the command of so incapable a man."

Thus saying, he turned up the little

street which led to the inn where he lodged, and, calling aloud for his servant, ordered him to bring round his horse at once.

"I wish, my lord," said Higham, in a very subdued tone, "you would let me speak with you for a few minutes. I have a good deal to say."

"By and by, Higham, by and by," replied Smeaton. "At present I am in haste; for I would fain see into this matter with my own eyes."

The man seemed about to speak again; but his lord made an impatient gesture with his hand, and, as soon as the horse was brought up, mounted and rode away. As he went through the narrow streets and lanes which then led out into the country, he heard more than one unpleasant observation from the groups which were collected everywhere.

"There goes another," said one man.

"I wonder any one stays who can get away," said a second.

"Ay, ay, these high Tory gentry take care of themselves," observed a third.

But no one attempted to stop the young nobleman's progress ; and to all idle comments he was very indifferent. Beyond the immediate neighbourhood of the town, he found the country nearly deserted ; the distance to Ribble Bridge, in which direction he first turned his steps, was somewhat longer than he expected ; but, from the summit of a little elevation upon the right, he perceived the small body of Highlanders marching towards the spot which he had advised Forster to occupy ; and, still gazing round, a cloud of dust, rising, at the distance of several miles in the direction of Wigan or Lane, seemed to show him that the advance of General Wills's army was something more serious and substantial than mere rumour. A minute or two after, a single horseman dressed entirely in black, was seen galloping along the road in the direction of the bridge over the Ribble. Smeaton spurred

forward towards him, instantly recognising Mr. Patten, and saluted him with the inquiry of—

“ What news ?”

“ Oh, they are coming, they are coming,” replied the clergyman, with a bold and assured face ; “ and I am just going to tell Lieutenant-Colonel Farquharson to withdraw his men from the bridge and retire into the town.”

“ In Heaven’s name, upon what motive ?” demanded Smeaton. “ Has General Forster formed any plan, or not ?”

“ Oh, he has formed a very excellent plan,” replied the clergyman, with a conceited air. “ It cannot be put in execution, however ; for the ford above is not to be found. The General, my Lord, had determined to pass the river and get into the rear of the enemy, or at all events attack them on the flank. But as this has now become impossible, he wishes Colonel Farquharson to retire and to confine the whole defence to the town.”

Smeaton looked at him with an expression of scorn and surprise, and then, without any farther notice, turned his horse sharply, and rode towards the banks of the river.

CHAPTER XI.

SMEATON struck the banks of the stream some little distance above the bridge, and with a keen and rapid eye traced the whole distance within the range of sight. He instantly marked a spot where there was a gentle undulation of the ground, and where the river spread out wide. "There must be one ford," he thought ; but, not satisfied without positive proof, he rode quickly on till he reached the place, and pushed his horse through the water and back again. Then

turning round, he was tracing the stream towards the bridge, when he perceived Van Noost mounted on a tall horse, and pursuing a course at an acute angle with his own, as if tending towards Preston. The statuary rode on at a rapid rate ; and his short, broad frame was agitated terribly by the quick pace of his rough-trotting horse. The legs flew out ; the shoulders heaved at every stretch ; and the bent back and head leaning far over the saddle bow, showed how he labored in the effort. The voice of Smeaton, raised loud to call his attention, made him give a sudden start in the saddle which had nearly overset the equilibrium—for he was no very skilful cavalier ; but as soon as he perceived who it was, he pulled hard at the right rein and rushed across the little piece of open ground towards his noble friend.

“ They are coming, my Lord, they are coming !” he cried, in a voice full of excitement, evidently not of the most pleasant kind. “ I have seen their advance-guard

myself. It is impossible to pass them ; and I don't know what to do. I must back to Preston I suppose, even though they catch me and cut my head off, leaving my body like a collar of brawn."

" Come here with me," cried Smeaton. " I will show you a way." And, without waiting for a reply, he rode on to the ford he had discovered, and pointed to it with his hand. " Over there, Van Noost," he said. " Take the left-hand road, and then make a circuit, keeping to the westward, till—"

" But, my Lord, my Lord," interrupted Van Noost, " they say General Carpenter is at Clitheroe, or very near it."

" If you keep well to the west," remarked Smeaton, " you will come to Garstang and Lancaster ; but speed on, my good friend. No time is to be lost."

" I shall never find it," replied Van Noost, with a rueful shake of the head. " Cannot you come, my Lord, and show me the way ?"

The young Earl smiled at the little kindly cunning of his poor friend ; but he shook his head, saying :

“ No, no, Van Noost, I must back to Preston. Remember my message to my dear lady, and tell her, if she sees me no more, that I loved her with my whole heart to my last hour.—Away, away, my good friend ! No more words.”

Seeing the good man pass safely through ford, he once more turned his horse towards the bridge. When he reached it, he found that, according to the orders which had been sent, Farquharson and his Highlanders had abandoned its defence. He could just catch a sight of the tartans winding up the narrow lane ; but he paused for a moment to gaze at the bridge before he rode after them. It was long, narrow, flanked with stout stone walls ; and every foot of the ground on the Preston side was defensible. The young nobleman felt that a great mistake had been committed ; that *there* was the place to fight,

and that upon such a spot small and irregular army like that of the insurgents, aided by cannon and sheltered by the hedges and high banks, might have won a victory even against a superior force of regular troops. He sighed as he turned away, and rode after the withdrawing party. When he reached its head, he bowed to the commander, with whom he had a slight acquaintance, saying :

“ So you have been withdrawn from the bridge, Colonel Farquharson.”

“ Even so, my good Lord ; and now for the rat-trap,” replied Farquharson, with a light, indifferent laugh, adding, the moment after—“ We shall bite our catcher’s fingers, however, I dare say ; and that is some satisfaction.”

“ But a poor one,” rejoined Smeaton. “ I would rather have flown at their throats by the side of the Ribble.”

So saying, he rode on.

All was bustle and activity when he entered Preston ; the scene was completely

changed from the morning ; the excitement of preparation, the prospect of speedy battle, the very occupation of mind and body, had restored spirit and energy everywhere except amongst the superior officers who, conscious by this time, of their general's incapacity, entertained no very sanguine expectation of the result. Some, sullen and gloomy, watched all that was taking place, giving a few directions, but sharing little in the toil ; others remained in the inns and private houses in melancholy despondency ; but others, amongst whom was the young Earl of Derwentwater, laboured cheerfully and zealously in the construction of the barricades which were already in rapid progress. Their example cheered, and their looks inspirited, the men ; and Smeaton was soon in the midst of them, labouring with the best.

But little time was allowed for the construction of the defences ; and that little was only obtained in consequence of Gen-

eral Wills being unable to conceive it possible that Forster had abandoned so important a point as the bridge over the Ribble. He hesitated in attempting to pass it ; he caused the whole ground in the neighbourhood to be carefully reconnoitred, fully believing that the hedges would be found lined with musketry ; and his march was thus retarded nearly an hour. At length, however, the first men of his small army were seen from the tall house of Sir Henry Haughton ; but, by that time, all was prepared to receive them. Four main barricades had been erected, with a number of smaller ones in different streets ; the windows of the houses on each side, together with the lanes and inclosures, had been garnished with infantry as far as the smallness of the force would permit ; and everything showed the determination of making a resolute defence. But the leaders of the insurrection had, strangely enough, determined to defend only what may be called the heart of the town ; so that the barricades had not been

pushed to the entrance of any one of the streets ; and several narrow lanes gave the enemy an opportunity of penetrating some way, at least, into the place completely unmolested.

Smeaton found the barricades nearly half completed when he re-entered the town. Following the example of the Earl of Derwentwater, he cast off his coat and laboured with the best to complete the defence, which was being constructed in the main street, a little below the church. He could not refrain, however, while pausing for a moment to take rest, from expressing his surprise to old Brigadier Macintosh, who stood near, that the barricade had not been placed at the extreme end of the street towards Wigan.

“ If the enemy push forward,” he said, “ with anything like vigour, a third of the town will be in their hands in five minutes.”

“ My good Lord,” replied the old officer, somewhat sullenly, “ even if you were

right—which I think you are not—it is too late to mend the matter now. To defend the extreme ends of the streets, where there are so many narrow lanes and avenues, would require three times the force of foot I have at command."

"This barricade, at all events," observed Smeaton, "might have been placed near the corner of that other street a hundred yards below—I mean just near the sign of the Ram there. It would then command both the approaches ; and the flank could no more be turned there than here. If the enemy get possession of that tall house, they will gall us sorely."

"Ah!" retorted the old officer, "young men are always wiser than their elders."

And, turning away, he walked to the other end of the barricade.

"Let him alone, Eskdale," said Lord Derwentwater. "He is as obstinate as an old pig, and gets perverse and sullen in proportion to difficulties and dangers."

"I *will* let him alone, my good Lord," replied the young nobleman ; "but I think it a duty to myself and to all, to do what I can to remedy the mistake which has been committed. You keep the men to their work ; and I will be back in a minute or two. That great cart, if it could be brought down, turned over, and filled with stones and earth, would make a very good defence at the corner there."

"What are you going to do ?" asked Lord Derwentwater, seeing Smeaton resume his coat and turn away.

"I am going to seek for Captain Hunter," replied Smeaton. "He is a man of activity, resource, and shrewdness, and will, I doubt not, lend me a few of his marksmen, if he can spare them, to occupy those houses down below, so as both to keep them for ourselves, and to gall the enemy in their advance up the street. Where do you think I shall find him ?"

"He is up with Miller and Douglas on

the Liverpool road," answered Lord Derwentwater. "Add my request to your own : the idea is a very good one." And, while Smeaton remounted his horse and hurried away, the other nobleman continued to animate the men, not only by his own personal exertions, but by distributing amongst them all the money he had about him.

In ten minutes, Smeaton returned with a body of some fifty men and Captain Hunter, the borderer, whose moss-trooping propensities and experience had rendered him a very serviceable man of action in any great emergency. Passing the barricade, without speaking to any one, they hurried on down the street till they reached the first turning out of it, where, dividing into two bodies, the one dispersed through the neighbouring houses on either hand, taking post at the windows, while the other body, consisting of about twenty men, advanced some way down the narrow lanes which led

out into the fields near the entrance of the high road to Wigan.

In the meantime, Brigadier Macintosh had remained watching the operation with his arms crossed on his chest ; but the moment he saw the men enter the mouth of the lane, he despatched a messenger after them, to order them instantly back. They returned unwillingly, with Hunter at their head ; but those in the houses were suffered to remain, and did good service throughout the day.

At some period during the morning, and before the attack actually commenced, Captain Innes, with a body of about fifty Highlanders, was thrown into the tall house belonging to Sir Henry Haughton which the young Earl of Eskdale had pointed out ; but they were recalled almost immediately, and the house left to its fate. In the confusion and hurry of that fatal day, it was not known who gave the order for their advance, or that for their recall.

The cannon of which the insurgents had possessed themselves, was divided amongst the different barricades ; but the difficulty was to find gunners ; for only one man in the whole army even pretended ever to have fired a cannon in his life ; and he, by the time the guns were planted, had imbibed a sufficient quantity of brandy to render the accuracy of his aim rather doubtful. A small powder-magazine was established near the centre of the town ; and a lame man, incapable of any great exertion on foot, but zealous, active and determined, was appointed to carry supplies on horseback to the several barricades.

As soon as all the arrangements were completed, and the foot-soldiers stationed behind the hasty works which had been constructed, the gentlemen volunteers, as they were called, retired to the church-yard, with their horses at hand, ready to sally out upon the enemy whenever a favourable occasion occurred. General Forster established his head-quarters at

the Mitre Inn, with his horses at the door, ready to carry him wherever his presence might be needed ; and it is now admitted on all hands that he showed no lack of courage or activity during the day.

When all was ready, a sort of solemn pause succeeded to the bustle ; the noise and confusion died away in the town ; and the occasional subdued talking of people in knots, with, from time to time, aloud-spoken word of command, or a call from one officer to another at a distance, were the only sounds that arose in the streets of Preston. From the fields and lanes beyond, however, came the beat of the drum and the blast of the trumpet, nearer, nearer, nearer yet : first in one spot, then from two or three different points around, showing that the forces of King George had reached the outskirts of the city and were spreading themselves round it preparatory to a general attack. In silent and awful expectation, the insurgents awaited the appearance of the heads of the enemy's columns. Sternly and stead-

factly they gazed over the barricades ; and no sign of fear or wavering was visible ; yet it was a terrible situation, to be thus waiting inactive for the commencement of a struggle which all well knew was for life or death.

At length, some boys, and a woman with a child in her arms, came running up into the main street out of the lane in which Smeaton had posted the party of Hunter's troop, afterwards withdrawn, and fled at full speed towards Macintosh's barricade. They were suffered to pass, and entered, exclaiming breathlessly—

“ They are coming up the lane, they are coming up the lane ! ”

No body of soldiers appeared, however, for several minutes ; and neither drum nor fife was heard. At length, however, a young officer, in his full uniform and with his sword drawn, entered the street from the head of the lane, paused calmly in the midst, and gazed up and down. In an instant, the word was given at the barricade,

the muskets were levelled, and the shot poured down the street. But there the young officer still stood, now examining the barricade, now raising his eyes to the houses on either side, amidst the rattle of musketry and the whizzing of balls, as calmly as if he had been in a drawing-room.

“Upon my life, that is a gallant fellow,” said Smeaton, to the Earl of Carnwath, who was standing near. “I wonder who he is.”

“That is Lord Forester,” replied the other nobleman. “I know him well by sight. He is lieutenant colonel of Preston’s regiment, the old Cameronians. I did not know they would be brought against us. If he does not mind, he will be shot down, poor fellow.”

As he spoke, however, the young officer retired into the lane; but it was only to return at the head of his regiment and to charge up the street. A small body of dragoons appeared at the same time to

support the infantry ; but a tremendous fire was opened upon the whole force, both from the barricade and the houses around, which instantly checked their advance ; a number of the Cameronians and several of the dragoons were seen to fall ; and, drawing up his men across the street, Lord Forester restored order which had been lost for a moment or two, directing the men to keep up a sharp fire upon the barricade, while detached parties from the rear and flanks stormed some of the houses and took possession of the mansion of Sir Henry Haughton which had so imprudently been left undefended.

Though the troops of the government made no progress up the street, they still remained firm in face of the barricade ; and the drunken gunner was now ordered to point and fire the cannon upon them. He adjusted both guns before he fired either ; but, from haste, stupidity, or drunkenness, the elevation of the first he discharged was so high that the ball, pass-

ing far over the heads of the soldiers, struck the chimney of a low house at the side of the street, and brought it thundering down upon the heads of some of Honeywood's dragoons behind. The other gun was more accurately adjusted ; and the ball went straight through the attacking force, killing and wounding several men in its passage. All haste was made to reload the two cannons ; and, in the mean time, a continual sharp fire was kept upon the Cameronians from the barricade and the houses round. Nevertheless, Lord Forester maintained his ground ; Haughton's house was filled with musketeers ; several other houses were taken after a severe struggle ; and a constant fire was kept up from the front upon the insurgents of the barricade. At length, however, the young officer was seen to fall ; but he rose again immediately, and continued to give his orders, pointing here and there with his sword, while one of the men tied a handkerchief round his leg.

"A charge of cavalry," observed Smeaton, to Lord Kenmure, "would drive them out of the town."

"Well, try it gentlemen, try it," said General Forster, who had just ridden up, and was speaking to Lord Derwentwater. "Mount your horses and follow me. We will get the brigadier to open a way for us."

Every one was in the saddle in a moment, and moved in good order down the street, while Forster rode on before ; and the fire of the King's troops, passing over the barricade, struck down one or two of the volunteers and several of their horses. As they approached the barricade, no movement was made to let them pass out ; and Forster was seen speaking vehemently to Brigadier Macintosh, who, with a dogged look of defiance, turned sullenly away just as Smeaton arrived upon the ground. What had passed before, none of the other gentlemen heard ; but Forster now exclaimed, in a loud and angry tone---"Very

well, sir, very well. Please God, if we are successful, and your master and mine ever obtains his rights, I will bring you to a court martial for your conduct."

Then turning to the noblemen and gentlemen who had come up on horseback he said, "Brigadier Macintosh objects to our making this sally, my lords. We had better therefore retire again to the church-yard, as there is no need of our exposing ourselves here when we cannot be of service. My Lord Derwentwater, I will ride up to one of the other barricades, and see if there is nothing to be done there ; for I feel that this inactivity must be painful to a body of zealous and brave men, all burning for his Majesty's service."

Thus saying, he rode away ; and the other gentlemen retired slowly up the street, with the bullets still flying amongst them, conversing, even in a laughing tone, upon what had taken place, and the conduct of those with whom they were engaged.

"I hope Macintosh will not let them gain

the barricade," said Lord Derwentwater, looking towards Smeaton as the most experienced amongst them.

"No fear at present, my lord," rejoined the young Earl. "He has stout men enough with him to keep out any force they can bring against him without cannon. He is a dogged, resolute fellow too ; and his honour is now staked upon the result, as he refuses counsel and assistance. Do you know where Colonel Oxburgh is, my lord ? I have not seen him all day ?"

"In an ale house, at his prayers," replied Lord Derwentwater, with a laugh. "So I am told, at least. When I saw him this morning, he was telling his beads with great devotion. And my good Lord Widrington, too, is absent from amongst us ; but he has the gout, you know."

Just as he spoke, a foot soldier ran up, saying, "They want more powder, my lord, at the barricade. Have you any in the church-yard ?"

"Not a spoonful," replied Lord Derwent-

water turning in at the gates of the cemetery, while the bullets whistled thicker and more fiercely up the street, as if the troops below had been reinforced, and a gentleman of the name of Ferguson was struck from his horse, with his leg shattered in a fearful manner.

"I will ride up and send some down directly," said Smeaton, galloping on.

The firing still increased; and the street, rising with a considerable slope, exposed any one passing along it near the top, more than even at the barricade. But the young Earl passed unscathed, and, reaching a narrow little court where the powder was piled up in bags, he found the lame man, waiting on horseback with a considerable load behind him, ready to set out in whatever direction he might be wanted.

"They are in great need of powder, my good friend," said Smeaton; "at the brigadier's barricade; but pause a moment till the fire slackens a little."

The man, however, put his horse in motion ; and one of his companions, who stood near, exclaimed, “ You will be killed, Rob, to a certainty, if you attempt to carry it up to the barricade now.”

“ I know that,” replied the other, calmly. “ That I cannot avoid ; but, as they want it, although I cannot carry it quite up to them, I will carry it as far as I can.” And, so saying, he rode on.

Smeaton turned out of the little court, and looked after him down the street. He saw him pass the church-yard, and get nearer and nearer to the barricade ; but, while he was still at about fifty yards’ distance, he beheld the poor fellow fall forward on the horse’s neck, clutching convulsively at the mane. In another instant he would have fallen from the saddle ; but, before he did so, a ball struck the horse also ; and both went down together. Some men ran out of one of the neighbouring houses and took the poor fellow up, while the powder was carried forward to the barricade by others on foot.

But Smeaton's attention was now drawn another way by sounds which came from a different part of the town. A loud shout like a cheer, mingled with the report of musketry and artillery, showed that the battle was raging fiercely there also ; and, turning his horse, he rode quickly in the direction whence the sounds proceeded, to see if anything was wanted or could be done. Guided by the ear, he made his way down a long, narrow lane, which led out into the fields, and soon came in sight of another barricade, at which Lord Charles Murray, a son of the Duke of Athol, commanded. This young nobleman had seen some service as a cornet of horse in the reign of Queen Anne ; but he had thrown up his commission at the commencement of the insurrection, and now appeared at the head of a body of his clan, dressed in the Highland garb, and covered with smoke and blood. The firing had ceased for the time ; but a good many dead and wounded men lay both before and behind the barri-

cade ; and the young officer was leaning on his sword, speaking to Patten, the clergyman, who was beside him on horseback.

“ Ah, my good Lord,” said the young nobleman, as soon as he perceived the Earl of Eskdale, “ I am sending Patten here for some aid from the churchyard. We have had a sharp affair, as it seems you have had down below ; but we have beaten the Hanover people back for the present, and, with a little aid, can maintain our ground till nightfall, which is not far off, I see. You are welcome to share in our work. If you will take a musket, there lies one in the hands of poor Jock Murray, who had just killed a stout Londoner with it before he was shot down himself. I hope it will be as fortunate in your hands.”

“ I hope so,” replied Smeaton, laughing, and springing to the ground. “ Mr. Patten, if you send up men, send up my servant with them to hold my horse.”

The pugnacious clergyman promised not to forget ; and in a few minutes Higham came running up, long before the appearance of the expected succour. The attack upon the barricade had been in the meantime renewed, and a furious fire was kept up by both parties. Lord Charles Murray was mounted on a pile of stones, giving his orders as coolly as if out of all danger, and the Earl of Eskdale, at a part of the barricade which had by some means been destroyed, was supplying by his own skill and experience the inefficiency of the only gunner who had been found to serve the two cannon which had been allotted to this position.

The servant ran up with a boldness and activity which a little surprised his lord ; and when he received orders to look after the horse, which had been left in charge of a Highland soldier, he contented himself with tying the beast to a hook on a neighbouring barn, and then, mounting the barricade close to where his master stood,

discharged a musket at the advancing enemy.

“What have you done with the horse, Higham ?” asked Smeaton, somewhat sharply. “I ordered you to take care of him.”

“He is quite safe, my lord,” replied the man, “and out of reach of the fire. I do beseech you, let me have a shot or two at these men. They killed my father when I was but a child—shot him at the back of his own cottage door.”

“None of these before you, Higham,” said the Earl ; “these seem all mere lads. But do as you please if the horse be safe. Only come down from the top of the barricade. You can fire as effectually from behind it.”

“Oh, my good lord, if you would but let me speak a few words with you !” said the man, in an earnest tone. “When we have beat them back, pray let me speak with you !”

“Well, so be it,” replied his master,

struck by the man's eagerness. "But come down at once, my good fellow. Come down I say!"

Almost as he spoke, Higham turned to obey ; but he either missed his footing, or some of the heterogeneous material of the barricade gave way under his feet; for he suddenly fell headlong down behind the defence.

The young Earl had not time to ascertain if he were hurt or not ; for, led on by their gallant officers with a loud cheer, the party of assailants rushed forward to the charge, determined, apparently, to storm the barricade. A well directed and sustained fire from the Highlanders, and from both pieces of cannon, however, checked them before they were within a hundred yards of the defence, and they were once more driven back in confusion.

A few minutes after, a party of fifty gentlemen volunteers came up to support the weary defenders of the barricade ; and when Smeaton turned to look for his ser-

vant, the poor fellow was nowhere to be seen.

A very short space of time was allowed for enquiry or repose. The troops of the Government were speedily rallied, and again brought forward ; but the effect of the reinforcement, both upon the energy of the defenders and the heaviness of the fire, was soon perceptible to the officers of the attacking body. Their men were repulsed more rapidly than before, and fled in greater confusion from the hail of shot that was poured upon them. Night was approaching : it was evident that the barricade could not be carried by the force then before it ; and slowly and reluctantly the commander of the assailants withdrew his force, just as the sky was growing dark. An angle of the road concealed, in a great degree, their movements, and some men were sent out over the barricade to ascertain whether the attack was actually abandoned. But even after they returned, announcing that the Government troops were

in full retreat, a hurried and desultory conversation was carried on amongst the officers and gentlemen within the barricade, in regard to the events of the day.

Lord Charles Murray was almost ignorant of what had taken place at the other points of defence ; but the gratifying news was brought in that the enemy had been repulsed at all points, except in front of Brigadier Macintosh's barricade, where they still maintained possession of some houses, and kept up a severe fire on all who attempted to pass. There were many words, and even some laughter rejoicing on the bloody spot where they stood ; but little of what could be called either conversation or counsel. Yet some ventured to suggest one thing as advisable to be done, and some another ; and Lord Charles Murray, without expressing an opinion, gave some directions for guarding the defence. Taking Smeaton's arm, he turned away, saying—

"By my soul, I must have some food and drink, Eskdale. I have been fighting here since two o'clock, and though the men have had brandy and beer enough, *I have tasted nothing.*"

Smeaton walked away with him, unfastening his horse, and leading him as he went. As soon as they were out of earshot of the rest, his gallant companion asked, in a low voice--

"And what do you think had better be done in this affair?"

"Give the men three hours' rest, and then either retreat upon Lancaster, through the meadows, or attack General Wills in his camp," replied the young Earl. "He is evidently but little of a commander, and I think we might have an easy victory before he is reinforced, or effect a quiet retreat to a more defensible place, for the town is not one half invested."

"We must abide the commands of our elders and betters, I suppose," replied Lord Charles, "though it is certain that, if Wills

is a bad general, Forster is a worse. However, here I stop to feed like a tired horse, if I can. Will you come in and sup?"

"Thank you, no," replied the young Earl, "I must go to look for my servant, who, I fear, is wounded, poor fellow!"

Thus saying, he and Lord Charles parted.

As Smeaton walked back to the upper part of the town, Preston presented a strange and gloomy scene. The firing at the other barricades had ceased; but still from time to time a single shot or a whole volley was heard from the houses near Macintosh's barrier, where either party had lodged itself; and there, it must be remarked, the struggle continued throughout the night. The shops and dwellings were all closed along the streets; the inhabitants kept carefully within doors; and few people were met, except here and there a soldier hastening from one point to another, a wounded man plodding painfully to seek for relief, or a dead or dying man borne

along by three or four others. From different parts on the outskirts of the town rose up a lurid glare, which lightened the vacant streets, showing that one party or the other had fired some of the houses in the suburbs ; and the distant drum and trumpet-call from without, mingled wildly with the sound of the bagpipe which was heard from two of the barricades.

The only groups of any size were collected round the doors of different public houses, which were kept open for the entertainment of the men ; and at these, Smeaton received full confirmation of the fact that the troops of the Government had, as he supposed, been repulsed at all points. A feeling of triumph animated all with whom he spoke, in which he was far from sharing ; but it is not impossible that, had the commanders been capable of taking advantage of the spirit of the hour, a different result might have attended the defence of Preston.

Nowhere, however, could Smeaton hear of his servant ; and, after a long and fruitless search, he retired to his quarters, and threw himself down to rest after his fatigues.

CHAPTER XII.

THE morning of Sunday the 13th dawned dull and heavily. The flames of the burning houses had been extinguished without doing much damage, although, had there been any wind, it is probable that Preston would have been reduced to a heap of ashes. The firing from the houses continued at intervals, and, once or twice, parties of King George's troops appeared in the streets, but instantly retreated under a sharp fire, by which several of the sol-

diers and officers were killed or wounded. A small number of prisoners, too, were made by the insurgents ; and amongst the common men, high spirit and resolution were displayed, though the officers shared little in their anticipations of success. It is true, the latter had better means of judging ; for the first prisoners that were made on that morning, brought them intelligence that forces were pouring in upon Preston from different quarters, and that General Carpenter, with three regiments of cavalry, had passed the night at the small town of Clitheroe about twelve miles distant. The next who came in, informed them that General Carpenter was within sight ; and, a few minutes after, some of their own men, from the higher buildings of the town, discovered his force advancing at a quick trot.

The soldiery were eager for action, and murmured loudly at the inactivity of their commanders. But no movement of any kind was made. Forster, Lord Widring-

ton, Colonel Oxburgh, and some others, continued in close consultation at the Mitre; and Smeaton, after having obtained all the information he could from the gentlemen who thronged the lower story of that inn, walked away by himself, and, entering the church, mounted as high as he could in the tower, to observe the motions of the enemy without. Two or three gentlemen were there before him; and they pointed out the newly arrived regiments of cavalry, which were drawn up in fine order on the right of General Wills's army. Smeaton said nothing, except "They have no cannon, I see," and continued to gaze from the tower with very little satisfaction at the sight presented. Two officers, followed by a small party of dragoons, were seen to ride away at a slow pace from the main body of the army, and to direct their course completely round the town, sometimes exposed to view as they crossed the open fields and meadows, sometimes hidden by the trees

and hedgerows. From time to time they stopped ; and, more than once, a trooper was suddenly detached from the escort, and galloped away to one of the regiments which were in position. Immediately, a small body would advance, and, riding quietly on, station themselves opposite to one or other of the many entrances to the town.

To the experienced eye of Smeaton, the proceedings which were taking place were very clear. He saw that a mind of greater intelligence than that of General Wills was now brought to act against the insurgents in Preston, that General Carpenter was changing all his predecessor's arrangements, and that, in a very short time, the town would be completely invested, and all chance of escape cut off. The thought of abandoning the cause individually had never crossed his mind. He had taken part in the insurrection most unwillingly ; but, having done so, he considered himself entirely identified with it.

Nevertheless, he could not see without a sigh the chance of the whole army effecting a retreat pass away. But despair begets indifference ; and from the moment he beheld the movements of General Carpenter, he felt that all was lost. He hummed a gay French air as he descended the narrow staircase from the tower ; and, though his face was thoughtful, it bore no trace of despondency.

Some gentlemen were gathering round the great gate of the churchyard, and about to take up their old position within its walls ; but the young Earl turned towards the little door on the left, near which was passing at the moment, on horseback, a merry Northumbrian physician, named Alcock or Walker, (for he had an alias,) who had acted as principal surgeon to the army during the preceding day. Anxious to obtain some intelligence of his servant, Smeaton hurried after him and laid his hand upon the bridle. The doctor seemed somewhat in haste ; but, as soon

as the young nobleman mentioned the subject of his anxiety, he replied :

“ Oh yes, my Lord, yes, the poor devil is shot in the stomach ; and, if he have not the strength of an ostrich, he will not easily digest his yesterday’s supper. By the way, I recollect he was exceedingly anxious to see you ; but I did not know where you were.”

The doctor seemed very desirous to move forward ; but Smeaton still detained him, and asking where poor Higham was to be found, learned that the man had been carried into a private house near the barricade where he had fallen. The young nobleman then proceeded to ask some further questions regarding the man’s state ; but the worthy doctor’s impatience could be restrained no longer ; and, leaning down his head, he whispered in Smeaton’s ear—

“ I beseech you, my noble Lord, let me go. I have made up my mind that we cannot do any service here, now that Car-

penter and his bullies have arrived ; and, as I reconnoitred the ground pretty strictly yesterday, I know that I can get out by Fishergate Street, across the meadows and the ford, and away. If you will take my advice, you will do the same."

Smeaton shook his head, saying, with a smile :

" Make haste, doctor, make haste ! Carpenter is altering all the posts ; and in five minutes he will be in those same meadows, across which lies your way."

Thus saying, he let go the bridle ; and Doctor Alcock trotted off. I may add that he was just in time ; for he and two or three others contrived to get out of the town and across the ford, under the very eyes of General Carpenter, who probably did not think it worth while to detach any of his escort in pursuit.

Smeaton, in the mean time, with a quick step, took his way towards the other end of the town, in order to visit the poor wounded man ; but, to reach the place, he

had to pass the door of the Mitre Inn ; and he soon saw symptoms of confusion and turbulence, which caused him to pause for a moment. The common soldiers were by this time all stationed once more at the barricades ; and a good number of the gentlemen volunteers were collected in the churchyard ; but some thirty or forty gentlemen, not of the highest rank, were either standing round the door or crowding the passage of the inn. All were talking together eagerly ; some were gesticulating vehemently ; and one young man, of the name of Murray, (not Lord Charles Murray), between whom and Smeaton a certain degree of intimacy had sprung up, as soon as he perceived the latter, ran up to him and caught him by the arm, saying, in a low, but stern and eager voice :

“ My Lord, I pray you come with me for five minutes. These men within are betraying us ; they are for giving us up into the hands of the enemy : the enemy we conquered yesterday at every

point. Come with me, I beseech you. You are a man of rank, and also of experience : a soldier : a brave man. They *must* listen to you."

"They have listened to me very little," returned Smeaton. "Otherwise, we should not have been in our present situation ; but go on. I will follow you."

Murray, whose eyes were flashing fire, and whose whole face was working with excitement, instantly darted back to the crowd, pushing his way fiercely through it and along the passage. Smeaton followed with a calm, grave air, more to learn what was taking place, than with any hope of his voice being attended to. His young acquaintance reached the stairs, and mounted, taking three steps at a time, till he reached the door of a room, at which stood a man with a drawn sword in his hand.

"You cannot pass, sir," said the man.
"The officers are at council."

"We must be of their council too," re-

sponded Murray ; and, without hesitation, he threw open the door and entered, followed by Smeaton, the sentinel making no effort to oppose them.

The scene within was already turbulent enough ; for the whole party, consisting of some ten or twelve, were talking together loudly and vehemently. Colonel Oxburgh, Lord Widrington, a Jesuit named Pierce, Sir James Anderton, and one or two others, were standing round General Forster, with a small table between them and another party, who seemed arguing some question with them very fiercely.

“Sir,” said Forster, with a flushed face, in answer to something which had just been said, “you are insulting. I place before you the plain, straightforward facts of the case. There is no chance for us whatever, except in taking advantage of the successes of yesterday to obtain a favourable capitulation.”

“Capitulation ! Who talks of capitu-

tion?" exclaimed young Murray, pushing forward quickly.

"*I do, sir,*" replied Forster: "I, the general of this army, by the commission of King James. We are completely surrounded, outnumbered, and our store of powder is failing fast. I have not spared my person. I have not shrunk from the fire of the enemy; but I can see and judge of what is necessary as well as any rash boy in England; and I say, the only chance of our not being slaughtered to a man, is to endeavour to make terms."

"What, with fifteen hundred gallant men, who would cut their way through a rock of stone rather than surrender!" exclaimed Murray, violently. "I will tell you what, General Forster: the soldiers—the brave common soldiers—will not hear of surrender. There are some gentlemen and noblemen amongst us, too, who are men of heart, and will not permit this. Here stands the Earl of Eskdale; a man

of great experience, and as unprejudiced as any one. His voice, I am sure, is not for surrender."

"Certainly not," replied Smeaton ; "for I would rather die with my sword in my hand, face to face with the enemy, than lay my head down on a block on Tower Hill ; and I believe that is the only choice."

"My lord, you are in no command here," said Forster. "I am the general in command of these troops, by the King's authority ; and, so long as I live, no one else shall command them."

"I do not in the least seek to do so," rejoined Smeaton. "I only give an opinion."

Before he could conclude the sentence, however, Captain Murray interrupted, exclaiming in a loud voice—

"This shall annul a traitor's commission which he is unworthy to hold!" And, drawing a pistol out of his belt, he levelled it at Forster's head, and pulled the

trigger. Some one,* however, struck up the muzzle just as he was in the act of firing ; and the ball lodged in the wainscot, about two feet above the mark.

A scene of indescribable confusion ensued, in the midst of which the vehement young officer was arrested and removed from the room. It was not for several minutes that anything like tranquillity was restored ; and then Smeaton turned towards General Forster, saying—

“ I regret this event exceedingly, General Forster ; but I trust that the young man’s intemperance and criminal conduct will not divert your attention from the truth of what he said. My belief is, that you will find it impossible to persuade the common soldiers to surrender, though they would risk less by it than we should ; and I do not think any man would be safe who would propose such a thing to them.”

* Mr. Patten declares that he was the man who saved Forster’s life ; but this is somewhat doubtful.

“ Nobody proposes to surrender, my lord, except upon favourable terms,” retorted Forster, sharply ; “ and, if those could be obtained, I suppose nobody would be fool enough to refuse them. However, permit me to say that the advice which you have withheld from us during the whole campaign, is not now desired.”

“ My advice was freely offered in the beginning,” returned Smeaton, coolly, “ but was treated, as all reasonable advice has been treated, with contempt, and was therefore never volunteered again till my own honour and life were concerned. I now not only give my advice, but protest, in the face of these gentlemen, against surrender upon any terms but those which shall secure our honour ; and, having said thus much, I wish you good morning.”

“ Depend upon it, my lord,” said Forster, in a milder tone, “ if we do treat for surrender at all, which is not yet determined, it shall be only on such terms as shall be satisfactory to all.”

Every one knows what it is to begin to parley with an enemy superior in force to ourselves ; and it would be tedious, even to the few readers who may be unacquainted with the events of that fatal day, to enter into details of all that occurred during the next four-and-twenty hours. Confusion, hurry, discontent, dismay, pervaded the whole town. Rumours spread of the intention to surrender ; and the troops were more than once ready to fall upon their officers and put them to the sword, but were kept quiet by means of gross and shameful falsehoods. They were told that General Wills had sent in to offer honourable terms, promising that the lives and liberties of all would be guaranteed ; and were assured that the coming and going of Colonel Oxburgh, and several of the royal officers, between the camp and the town, solely had reference to minute points in the capitulation. In the meanwhile, however, the messages which went out, commenced with bold and somewhat excessive de-

mands ; but gradually firmness and courage oozed away. General Carpenter and General Wills sternly refused all terms, and only promised that, if the insurgent force surrendered at discretion, it should not at once be put to the sword. "No other terms," they said, "would be granted to rebels with arms in their hands." One small concession, however, was made : namely, that a cessation of arms should be granted till seven the next morning, in order to allow time to persuade the common soldiers to submit ; but hostages were exacted to insure that no farther defences were thrown up in the town, and that no persons should be permitted to escape.

A night of intense anxiety, discussion, persuasion, turbulence, and confusion, succeeded ; but, before the appointed hour, despair had taken possession of almost all hearts, though there is some doubt as to whether the Highland troops were not deceived to the very last, and induced to believe that they laid down their arms upon

favourable conditions. Before seven o'clock, the noise and confusion had subsided into sullen and discontented submission ; the Highlanders were drawn up in the market-place ; the noblemen and gentlemen who had joined in the insurrection remained at their various quarters ; and, with drums beating and trumpets sounding, Generals Carpenter and Wills entered the town at the head of their troops, from the Manchester road on the one side and the Lancaster road on the other.

It was a moment of some anxiety ; for there was no certainty, even to the last minute, whether the troops of the insurrection would not make use of their arms in one last desperate effort in the market-place. But they had no confidence in their officers, no plan arranged amongst themselves ; and, surrounded by a large body of cavalry and infantry, any attempt at resistance would have brought on a massacre rather than a fight. They laid down their arms, therefore, at the word of command, and

were marched off by companies to the church, where they were kept pent up for many days under a strict guard. Some of the royal officers were then sent to receive the arms of the officers and gentlemen volunteers, who were put under arrest in various inns and private houses ; and thus ended an insurrection which had begun rashly, and been carried on without skill or even ordinary discretion.

In the transactions which preceeded the surrender, Smeaton had taken no part except that which I have mentioned. From the Mitre, he had proceeded to the house where his servant, Thomas Higham, lay, and found the poor fellow in a weak and apparently sinking state. The surgeon, who was with him at the time, and who had just extracted the ball, would not suffer any conversation, but expressed some hope of his recovery if he were kept quite quiet ; and Smeaton, leaving a small sum of money with him to provide any comforts he might require, departed with a promise to visit him again if possible.

When, about half past eight o'clock, one of the royal officers entered the young nobleman's quarters, he found him calmly writing letters, with his sword and pistols on the table before him. He treated his prisoner with perfect courtesy ; received his arms and handed them to an orderly behind ; and then, pointing to the letters, said, " I fear these cannot be permitted to pass, my lord, without being submitted to the generals in command "

" I do not expect it," replied Smeaton ; " but I think they will find nothing to object to. One is to my mother, which I should much wish forwarded to her as soon as possible, if she be still living. The other is to the Earl of Stair ; and I should wish you to place it in the hands of General Carpenter, who will perceive that it refers to matters which have been already in discussion between us, and in regard to which I think I have been hardly treated. I know not, indeed, that it can have any influence on my ultimate fate ; and that fate I trus

I am prepared to meet as a man of courage and a man of honour ; but I write it as a full explanation of my whole conduct, that no stain may be upon my character, and that it may be apparent that I have not in the slightest degree, or in any way, forfeited my given word. I trust that the Earl of Stair will be able to explain his conduct as satisfactorily. I do not accuse him ; but there has been a fatal mistake somewhere."

The officer took the letters and promised to give them into the hands of General Carpenter ; adding, in a kindly tone,

" If there is anything I can do for your convenience, my lord, consistent with my duty, you have merely to command me."

" Nothing that I know of," replied Smeaton ; " except, indeed, if you would exert your influence to have kind treatment shown to a poor servant of mine, who was severely wounded on Saturday at Lord Charles Murray's barricade.

"I will see to his comfort myself," said the officer ; and then, putting down his name and the house where he was to be found, he added, "I will see to this directly. I fear I must put a sentinel at your door, my lord, till you are otherwise disposed of ; but he will have directions to consult your convenience as far as possible."

Thus saying, he withdrew ; and Smeaton was left alone in his room, a prisoner.

CHAPTER XIII.

I MUST now turn to different scenes and to people whom I have long left, in order not to break the chain of events immediately affecting the young Earl of Eskdale.

In one of the narrow streets leading away from Tower Hill, there is a house rather better than the others, but still small and inconvenient. Centuries ago, that street was the resort of many a gay and gallant attender upon the court ; and,

even at the time I speak of, was inhabited by a respectable though poor class of the population. It was the place where captains of ships trading between London and foreign ports, usually found lodging during their stay on shore. The house I have mentioned was the best of these lodging-houses, and, through the kindness of the governor of the Tower—who was, an easy, kind-hearted man, as all his conduct to his prisoners showed—it had been hired for the family of Sir John Newark, immediately upon his arrival in custody of the messengers from Exeter. Let it be remarked, the whole house had been kind ; and the good woman to whom it belonged, who had had the good luck before to let the whole of her apartments at once, went joyfully into a garret at a neighbour's, to make way for Emmeline and the servants.

How the fair young Countess of Eskdale had passed her time in that small, dingy house; how sad had been her thoughts

as, day by day, she received news from the north, and heard of her husband's part in the insurrection ; how, at the end of about six weeks, she was joined by old Mistress Culpepper, and how, with marvellous fortitude and strength of mind, the good old servant supported the young lady in the sore trial which she underwent, I must not stop here to detail.

Emmeline sat alone in a little room on the ground floor, with small and narrow windows, parted by mullions and transoms, and affording but little light. She had paid her daily visit to Sir John Newark in the Tower, and had returned from a very unsatisfactory interview. The political prisoners, made at various times during the insurrections of 1715 and 1716, were treated, as all the world knows, with a degree of lenity—not to say laxity—during the time of their imprisonment, which contrasted strangely with the unrelenting severity shown to many of them in the end ; and men, waiting for trial and destined to a

bloody death, were suffered to enjoy the society of their friends almost without restriction ; nay, more, were suffered to revel, to gamble, to drink within the dark walls which were only to be succeeded by the walls of the tomb, and to employ any means they might think fit, innocent or vicious, to wile away the time and banish the grim thoughts of approaching doom.

All these facilities were given to Sir John Newark ; and, indeed, nothing was wanting to his comfort except liberty ; but yet the imprisonment weighed upon him and rendered him irritable and suspicious. To be deprived of all power of scheming—to be obliged to sit idle when he fancied that great opportunities for playing the game in which he was well practised were constantly occurring—to find the government maintain a cold and ominous silence in return for all the advances which he made, and to know that they had proofs against him of very dangerous intrigues,

though not, perhaps, of high treason itself —all tended to depress and to annoy him more than the mere loss of his personal freedom.

During the last week he had, for the first time of his life, showed himself irascible and harsh towards Emmeline. He insisted that whenever she stirred out of the house, even to the gates of the Tower, she should be attended by two of his men servants ; and she discovered that one or the other of these men was sent for daily, and examined strictly by his master as to where she had been, whom she had spoken with, and what she had done : in fact, that she was watched in London as she had been at Ale Manor. It is not, perhaps, wonderful that she felt more annoyed now than she had ever before felt at this *espionnage* ; for, until the arrival of the old housekeeper, it was carried on so strictly that she could hardly obtain any information regarding those events in the north, on the turn of which depended her whole happiness for life.

The good woman's appearance at the house, which was sudden and unexpected, was a great comfort to the poor girl. She no longer sat and wept by herself, or, with her eyes fixed upon the embers of the fire, gave herself up to thoughts which passed in rapid succession, like dark and terrible shadows of approaching misfortunes. Good Mrs. Culpepper sat with her now the greater part of each day, obtained information for her, talked of him she loved ; and there was consolation in the very companionship, though the housekeeper was in no way cheerful ; for her own anticipations regarding Smeaton were gloomy and sinister. She did not suffer them to find voice, indeed ; yet her whole manner and words were tinged with sadness. Even that which afforded poor Emeline the greatest delight, gave her no comfort.

About three weeks before the period of which I speak, a letter had reached the lady, delivered by an unknown hand, but

bearing the signature of her husband. It was the letter which Smeaton had written to her at Rothbury, and committed to the charge of Richard Newark. As her cousin's name was not mentioned, however, and he had never himself appeared, Emmeline knew not who had brought it ; and she pored over it day after day as the only comfort of her solitary life ; but the confirmation which that letter gave of the rumour that Smeaton was actually engaged with the insurgents in the north, only excited darker apprehensions for his fate in the mind of his old nurse. It was in vain that tidings arrived, which produced some consternation in the minds of the good Londoners, by showing that the rebels were making a bold and, apparently, successful irruption into England : it was in vain that she heard of their advance towards Carlisle, or of the dispersion of the great body of militia in Penrith Moor, of the insurgents having seized upon Lancaster, and of the arming of Manchester in their favour :

Mrs. Culpepper shook her head with a sigh. She had seen insurrection and civil war before ; and her expectations were all sad.

On the morning of which I speak, a rumour reached her of the fatal events of Preston ; and, after Emmeline's visit to Sir John Newark, on which occasion Mrs. Culpepper accompanied her, the old lady went out into the town to see if she could obtain farther intelligence. Emmeline sat alone then in that small, gloomy room ; and her thoughts were very dark and sorrowful. She reasoned with herself, as was her wont, upon human life, and the strange turns of fate. She asked herself what was the ruler of this world, and what was his decree ? Were the good, and the wise, and the kind-hearted, fated to sorrow and misfortune ; the cunning, the remorseless, the unfeeling, to prosperity and triumph and success ? Was hope only given for disappointment ? Was imagination but the heightening curse to make all the bitterness of earth more

bitter? Were the susceptibilities of everything that is beautiful and excellent in life, only given to sharpen the sting of adversity, and make the edge of sorrow cut more deeply? She could hardly believe it; and yet, when she turned her eye to history, or even pondered what her own small experience taught her, she could hardly doubt that such was the case; and the only moral she could derive, from the consideration was, that—"The reward of the good is not here."

Yet that is an oppressive and chilling conviction to the ardent heart of youth. It is a hard discouragement at the commencement of life's weary way. It requires an amount of faith and hope as its antidote which few of the young possess. It is one of the bars of the sieve through which the wheat is sifted from the chaff. Emmeline might and did turn her thoughts to God and to another world. She might and did feel that there was the rewarder and the reward; but yet her

heart felt very sad to see the blight upon all the flowers of earth, and to fear that none would ever be matured into fruit.

While she was thus pondering sadly, she saw a man pass up the street, whose figure had something in it familiar to her eyes. In an instant after, he repassed, and looked up towards the house. She instantly remembered his face. It was connected in her mind with a scene and a moment never to be forgotten. It was connected indissolubly with the memory of him she loved ; and, by a sudden impulse, she sprang forward and opened the window.

“ He must have seen my husband,” she thought. “ He must bear me some tidings, some message ; a letter, perhaps.”

Van Noost (for heit was) stopped the moment he heard the window open, looked up and down the street, which was vacant at the moment, and then approached.

“ Lady, lady,” he said, “ I wish to speak with you. I bear you a message from one you know and love.”

" Speak it now, speak it quickly," said Emmeline, clasping her hands together in her eagerness.

" Ay, lady, it is a sad message and a sad tale," rejoined the good statuary, with tears rising in his eyes ; " and you will hear it soon enough."

" Speak, sir, speak!" cried Emmeline.
" What did my Lord say ?"

" He said, dear lady," answered Van Noost, " that he feared there was little hope of himself and the others escaping from the position in which they had placed themselves, much against his wishes and advice. He besought you, however, to take comfort, whatever might happen to him, and to place your trust in God. He would not write, he said, for fear of his letter falling into other hands ; for I myself escaped with difficulty ; but he bade me assure you that, whatever occurred, he loved you with his whole heart till his last hour."

" Then where is he ? What has be-

come of him ?" asked Emmeline. " Tell me, tell me."

" I left him at Preston, madam," replied Van Noost, " but surrounded by the King's forces, and ready every moment to be overwhelmed by numbers. He insisted upon my leaving the army and making my peace with the government ; but he himself remained, though fully aware of all the danger."

" At Preston !" said Emmeline, thoughtfully. " How long is it since you left him ?"

" This is the ninth morning," replied Van Noost. " I reached London three days ago, and gave myself up to government. I looked honest I, suppose ; or else they could not do without my statues any longer ; for, after keeping me in prison two days, and examining me strictly, they let me go back to my own house upon the sole condition of showing myself to a messenger twice in every four-and-twenty hours."

"Nine days!" exclaimed Emmeline. "That is a long time. Has no news arrived from Preston since?"

Van Noost looked down upon the ground; and his good rosy countenance turned white with emotion.

"You have some tidings," said Emmeline, in a low tone. "Tell me what they are, I beseech you, sir. I can bear them, whatever they be.—Speak quickly, or my heart will break."

"Alas, lady!" ejaculated Van Noost.

"He is dead," said Emmeline, in a tone wonderfully calm. "He has been killed in the battle!"

"No, no! Not so, indeed," replied Van Noost. "He is a prisoner, lady, but not dead. All the rest are prisoners too."

Before he ended, Emmeline's ear was deaf to his words. Fancy had so fully possessed her, only the moment before, with the idea of her husband's death, that when she heard he was still living, though a captive, the change from despair to hope

was too sudden ; her heart beat for a moment violently, then became still as if in death ; and she sank upon the floor.

Poor Van Noost was shocked and terrified ; he thought he had killed her ; and he would fain have made his way through the window to give her help ; but just at that moment the tall and stately form of Mrs. Culpepper appeared coming up the street ; and, as soon as she saw him looking in at the window, she hurried her pace, asking him sharply—

“ What are you doing here, sir, staring in at the window of this house ? Are you a thief who would fain break in and steal ? —Ah,” she continued, as he turned more fully towards her, “ I think I have seen your face before.—Yes. I recollect you now. What are your tidings ? Where did you leave my Lord ? Is he amongst the prisoners ? ”

“ He is, madam,” replied Van Noost, who stood in great awe of the stately presence of the housekeeper. “ He is

amongst the prisoners, if, by ‘my Lord,’ you mean the Earl of Eskdale. But I beseech you, look to the lady within ; for a message I have just borne her has, I fear, well nigh broke her heart.”

“ Or the rash telling it,” said Mrs. Culpepper, somewhat sternly ; but she added the next moment : “ You did not intend it, I dare say. Come in with me.” And she knocked sharply at the door. It was opened by one of the men, who seemed somewhat surprised to see her accompanied by a stranger. But no one in the household ventured to question the proceedings of Mrs. Culpepper ; and, telling Van Noost to follow, she entered the room on the right hand. They found Emmeline lying where she had fallen, with her cheek as pale as the lily, and her eyelids closed. It was long before she could be brought to herself; but the old housekeeper sent away the servants, told Van Noost to wait without and she would speak with him, and then whispered comfort in the poor girl’s ear.

"All will go well, dear lady," she said. "All will go well, sweet Emmeline. He is a prisoner; but he is still living; and there are a thousand chances in his favour. They may try him, but not condemn him. They may condemn him, and yet pardon him. They may be obdurate, yet he may escape. He *shall* escape, too, if there be wit in woman's head, such as men say. Take heart, take heart; everything is to be gained, so long as his life is safe."

It is wonderful how readily an old proverb springs before all other expressions in moments of haste or grief.

"Oh yes, while there is life there is hope," responded Emmeline, sobbing. "It was the joy of finding he was living, when Van Noost's first words had made me believe him dead, that overcame me.—But where is Van Noost? Let him tell me more." And she looked towards the window wistfully.

"The man is in the hall," replied Mrs. Culpepper. "I will call him in."

She accordingly summoned Van Noost, and ordered one of the servants who was still with him in the hall, to go below and mind his work, in a tone that admitted no reply. Van Noost was then questioned eagerly, and told the whole tale of his escape and the circumstances in which he had left the Earl of Eskdale. The good man was going on to disburden himself of all the news which he had gathered in London of the surrender of the insurgent army at Preston ; but Mrs. Culpepper cut him short, saying—"What is your name, good sir, and where do you live ?"

"My name is Van Noost," replied the statuary. "It is a well known name. I am the famous artist in lead ; and I live on the Reading Road, nearly opposite the end of Constitution Hill."

A grim smile came upon Mrs. Culpepper's face ; and she said—"Very well. Perhaps we may want you. I doubt not you are willing to serve this young nobleman who so befriended you in getting you out of Preston."

"I would serve him with my life's blood," replied Van Noost; "but, gadzooks! I must take care not to burn my fingers in the business again."

"You are more likely to burn your fingers with your lead than with any business we shall give you," observed Mrs. Culpepper, drily; "but, for the present, good bye, sir; and if you get any news or hints worth hearing, pray let us have them. But be discreet; ask for me—Culpepper, the housekeeper; and, if I be not within, wait till I come."

"By my life, an imperious dame," said Van Noost to himself, as he retired; and the housekeeper, after remaining for a moment or two in silent thought, turned to Emmeline, saying—

"Comfort yourself, dear lady. I will away to Sir John, and carry him the intelligence I have got, which, probably, has not yet, reached the Tower. I must contrive to get rid of some of these men who are here, for they will hamper our movements; and I think

in this Preston business I can find an excuse for sending one at least, if not more, down to Ale. He has not forgotten the bait of Keanton yet, and will rise at it as readily as ever."

CHAPTER XIV.

SLOWLY, and for him very soberly, with his eyes bent upon the ground, and his thoughts heavier than his own statues, Van Noost took his way across the little street towards a turning which led away to the westward some small distance higher up. He had not passed the doors of three houses, however, when suddenly a voice called him by name ; and, turning round, he saw the outline of a man's figure standing some way down a narrow entrance

passage, and beckoning to him with his hand.

“Van Noost,” said the voice again, “come hither. I want you. Come hither, man of flesh and lead. There is no danger to your carcase. A dagger would lose itself before it found your ribs. Don’t you know me, man ??”

“I can’t see your face,” replied Van Noost, “but, odds wounds ! your voice is very like that of Master Richard Newark, who left us at Rothbury.”

“Come in, come !” cried the other. “Do not stand chattering there like a pie on an elm tree, calling all the other birds to wonder what the fool is prating of. If you know my tongue, that is enough. Sound is as good as sight, and sometimes better. Come in, I say, thou man of molten images.”

Without farther question, Van Noost entered the door-way, although with some degree of trepidation ; for the poor man had been sadly shaken by all that he had

lately undergone—fat being no case-hardening of the nerves, as many of us must very well know. No sooner was he within the door, however, than Richard Newark threw it sharply to, caught him by the arm, and drew him along towards a small room on the left, where the stronger light showed the statuary that he had not been mistaken. The small chamber was a fair specimen of an ordinary lodging house of the day—dingy with ages of uncleansed walls and unwhitened ceilings. Wooden chairs of an indescribable brown ; a table of the same hue and material ; a corner-cupboard garnished with broken cups and saucers—a piece of sealing wax—a tallow candle in a brass candlestick, and a bottle with two or three glasses ; a looking-glass of the breadth of one's hand ; an old cracked punch-bowl, and two apostle spoons, made up the furniture. To these were added a pair of tobacco pipes on the table, with a pile of shag tobacco in an open box, and several other articles,

the peculiar property of the young tenant.

But, if to find Richard Newark, the son of the wealthy and somewhat ostentatious Sir John, in so lowly a dwelling, excited the wonder of the statuary, what was his surprise at the appearance of the young man himself ! The gay apparel which Richard, with youthful vanity, had ever affected, was partly cast aside, and he stood before Van Noost in the garb of a seaman, with large breeches tied with enormous bunches of ribband at the knees, grey stockings, and half a foot of clean shirt shown at his waist. The upper man displayed the marks of a rather superior station. The long-waisted, broad-flapped, coat, with a small silver lace, seemed to indicate an aspirant to future command, and at the same time, gave him the appearance of a man five or six years older than he really was ; while the waistcoat of embroidered silk, and the laced cravat, showed the remnant of still higher pretensions.

"Will Van Noost sit down and take a pipe?" said Richard Newark. "We will soon have a glass of grog and a good gossip. Ay, do not stare till your eyes leap into the tobacco-box. Here I am, a sailor for the nonce ; and, on my life and soul, I have a great mind to remain one till my dying day. Why, man, I never knew what freedom was before. Here I can go where I like, do what I like, say anything I please, to man, woman, or child, and no one takes offence or calls me a fool for my pains. 'Tis but a mad trick of the sailor-lad, do what I will ; and I have learned more man's knowledge in this garb, during the month I have been in London, than I should have learned during ten years at Ale."

"Pray God, Master Richard, you have not learned more than is good for you !" ejaculated Van Noost. "I had an apprentice from the country, who was quite spoiled with three months' residence in London."

"But I am no apprentice, noble lead-

boiler," retorted Richard. "What makes you think there is anything spoilable in me? I am not a haunch of venison, nor a new-caught trout, a cream tart, nor a jelly, to grow mouldy on a moist day, or stink in the nose when the wind is southerly. What makes you think I may, can, might, could, should, or ought to be spoiled?"

"Why, because I find you here, sir, masquerading in a low house," replied Van Noost, "while your beautiful cousin is pining in solitude in a house hard by, your father a prisoner in the Tower, and your best friend in bonds at Preston."

Richard Newark was instantly serious, and he leaned his head on his hand for a moment, in deep thought.

"You are wise," he said at length; "very wise, as this world's wisdom goes. So all men would judge me, seeing only what you see. But you are mistaken, nymph-maker. As to my father, his life is saved, if it ever was in danger, which I do not think. The son's virtue in abandoning rebels, has been

taken for an equipoise to the father's guilt in encouraging them underhand. That I have made sure of. Deserters and recreants are prime favourites now at court; and as I was one of the first, I was abundantly well received."

He paused, with a bitter and sarcastic expression of countenance, and then went on—

"As to Emmeline, do not think, Master lead-melter, that I forget her. What am I here for? What am I in this garb for? Is it not to watch over her in secret, and turn the danger from her when it may come? Do I not know every step she takes through the streets? Do I not know when she goes out and when she returns? Do I not see every one who approaches her door?—Poor Smeaton!" he continued, in a sadder tone; "what help can be given to him, Heaven knows! I do not. I wonder if it be true that he is one of the prisoners at Preston. Methinks he is not a man to

be taken in the same sweep of the net with less fishes."

"Ay, sir, but he would not leave the less fish in the net and break through it himself, as he might have done," replied Van Noost.

"And as you did," said Richard Newark; and then, after a moment's silence, he added, "And so did I. Pshaw, man, do not look red in the gills about it! We are the wise men, and Smeaton the fool; but there are wiser men even than ourselves. For instance: the man who not only turns his back upon his friends, but sells them: the man who makes a merit of his treason, and bargains for something better than forgiveness. Do you understand me?"

"Faith, but darkly, Master Richard," answered Van Noost. "If you know any such, you know more than I do."

"I know one at least," replied Richard; and then in his usual rambling way, he returned to the subject of his friend, saying, "Poor Smeaton! his has been a hard fate,

to be lured into the fatal trap—cheated into the net at the very moment of his happiness. He has had foul play, Van Noost."

"Ay, he complained much of Lord Stair," observed Van Noost. "That man did not behave well to him."

"Lord Stair!" cried Richard Newark, with a laugh. "There were others who behaved worse than Lord Stair. Indeed, I know not that Lord Stair behaved ill at all; but others did. Lord Stair did not intercept his letters; Lord Stair did not lure him to meetings of conspirators upon false pretences; Lord Stair did not give information secretly against him, pretending to be his friend: but others did. Lord Stair did not take every means to drive him into rebellion, in order to get his estate; but others did."

"Who—who?" asked Van Noost, eagerly.

"My father," answered Richard Newark;

and a dead silence followed for several minutes.

At length, Van Noost said, in a low, quiet tone—

“I think, Master Richard, if all this can be proved, the government would deal with the Earl of Eskdale’s case favourably.”

“And who is to prove it?” exclaimed Richard, vehemently. “Am I to go and denounce my own father to the government? Am I expose all these turnings and windings of his to grave officials in flowing wigs?”

“No; but you might tell Lord Stair himself,” replied Van Noost. “You might show him how this noble lord has been wronged; and, if he really have any regard for him, and be the man that people say he is, he will intercede for him with the King.”

Richard Newark leaned his head upon his hand, and mused.

“Lord Stair is in Paris,” he said, at length; “and I cannot—I must not—quit

this spot. Besides, how do we know that Smeaton is living even now ? They have shot some forty of their prisoners at Preston."

" Those were only officers who had served in King George's forces," replied Van Noost, " and, being found in rebellion, were tried by a court martial and executed on the spot ; but the noble Lord was not amongst them. I have seen the list this very day. He is amongst those whom they are marching up to London."

" Well, we shall see, we shall see," said Richard. " We shall have time, at least. Time is everything in this world, as the grasshopper says ; and, if I dared stir from this place, perhaps I might do something ; but I must see Smeaton first. They keep them somewhat loosely in their prisons ; and I shall get in, I dare say."

" But what keeps you here, sir ?" asked Van Noost. " You surely cannot be tied down to this one little street."

" Very nearly," replied the young gen-

tleman. "I am seldom absent for many minutes till that house opposite is shut up at night. Did you ever see a cat sitting before a mouse-hole, Van Noost, hour after hour, looking half asleep yet ready to spring the moment the little brown gentleman, with the long tail, pops out, and nothing showing her impatience but by the convulsions of the tip of her tail? Well, I am just the cat, watching for I know what will follow, though I know not when. My scoundrel mouse is winding about in his secret holes and crannies, and thinking I know nothing of his doings.—But let us talk of other things. I will think of all this; and you come and see me every day. There, drink some brandy and smoke your pipe.—Or will you have wine? We will get wine in a minute. Here, William, John! My two hounds, where are you?"

To Van Noost's surprise, two men, or rather lads, for neither of them certainly was two-and-twenty, appeared in answer

to the young gentleman's summons, dressed both alike, yet not exactly in livery, though they evidently acted the part of Richard Newark's servants. One was sent one way for meat, and another for wine ; and, changing his place, the young gentleman seated himself behind a blind near the window, whence he could see down the little street in which the house stood. When the men had returned and set down the things which had been ordered, with plates, glasses, and knives, Richard moved his place again, saying to the elder of the two—

“ Mind the watch, for I shall be busy for an hour or so.”

“ A bird shall not fly past without our seeing him,” replied the man, and left the room with his companion.

At all times, and in all circumstances, Van Noost was well pleased to eat and drink. Care, fear, or anxiety never took away his appetite ; and he did ample justice to the viands set before him.

A rambling, desultory conversation followed ; but Richard Newark would not suffer it to fall back into the channels through which it had been previously flowing. He talked of all that had occurred during the insurrection, of his own escapade to the north, and of what he had seen and done while travelling about with the Northumbrian gentlemen ; and, though his conversation and his manners were now more like his former self, yet Van Noost could not help being much struck with the great change which had come over him within the last few months. That short period of busy existence—the companionship of men, and the association with superior minds—had effected a remarkable transformation ; but the manliness of manner and decision of thought which he had gained, could only be attributed to the habit and necessity of acting for himself, and the development, under such necessity, of a character naturally decided, sharp, and fearless, though rather distorted and out of shape.

The time passed pleasantly enough ; and on his departure, Van Noost promised to return. He did not fail to keep his word, but went back more than once, gaining in some degree upon Richard Newark's confidence at each visit, and consulting with him upon what was to be done in the case of the Earl of Eskdale.

The result of these consultations we shall see hereafter ; but one thing Van Noost could not comprehend in his companion : namely, the obstinacy with which he refrained from going to see his fair cousin, and from even letting her know that he was in her immediate neighbourhood. The good statuary tried many circuitous ways of arriving at his motives ; and, when at length he asked him distinctly, Richard replied, with one of his wild laughs—

“ Ay, you could not understand, Van Noost ; and, to say truth, I myself do not understand. I have seen birds caught by perching on lime twigs. Things have been

put into my head which I wish had never come into it. Besides, I am better where I am. I can do more, devise more, prevent more, when I am working unseen. No, no, it would never do ; but I'll tell you what, good friend : I must have a little liberty and some fresh air. I must arrange, and trust to my two boys for a day now and then. I am getting ill in this close hole ; and my brain begins to spin and whirl round as it used to do at school. Can you not contrive to hire us a couple of horses ? for mine I sold when I came to London. We will have a ride, Van Noost—we will have a ride on the north road."

Van Noost readily consented ; and it was agreed that the next day, at the hour of noon, he should be with a pair of horses in Smithfield, where Richard Newark was to join him.

The young gentleman was on the spot before him ; and there was an eagerness and excitement in his look, which the statuary did not understand. Springing

on the horse's back, Richard Newark set off at a pace much too fast to be agreeable to his companion. They soon cleared the suburbs of London, however, passing a great number of people on the road, some on horseback and some on foot, who were all tending the same way, though at a more sober pace.

"I wonder what these people are all pouring out of London for," said Van Noost, as they rode along. "There must be some sport going forward."

"Ha ! ha ! don't you know !" exclaimed Richard, wildly. "They are going to meet the prisoners coming in ; and so am I !"

This announcement was not altogether palatable to the good statuary, who felt certain that he should be recognized by some of the prisoners, and be placed in an awkward position. It was not, indeed, that he feared his acquaintance with those who had joined in the insurrection would in any degree endanger his per-

sonal safety ; and, to do him justice, he would have risked that under any circumstances ; but, as it was, he had made a clean breast of it to the Secretary of State, and obtained even more than he could expect, amounting, in fact, to a conditional pardon. The thought, however, of having fled from Preston ; of not remaining with Roman courage (which he always had an ambition of displaying, if his constitution would but have let him) to fall with a falling cause ; and of having sneaked away in much haste and trepidation at the approach of real danger, made him feel very awkward when he thought of encountering his former companions in rebellion. He explained his feelings to Richard Newark as well as he could, hinting, at the same time, that the young gentleman himself was in a similar situation.

But Richard only laughed aloud, saying, “ Well, get out of the way then, when we come near them. Pop into an inn, or hide your shame-faced noddle in some barn or

shed. As for me, I shall go up and speak to any one I know. I am not the least ashamed of anything I have done ; and I will cut that man's throat who says I have cause to be."

They rode on as far as Highgate, leaving the crowd behind them as they went ; and, a little beyond that place, they saw a cloud of dust upon the road before them, which seemed to announce the approach of the prisoners. There was a small public house near, in which Van Noost took refuge as speedily as possible. Richard Newark dismounted also ; but he remained on the outside of the house, with his arms folded on his chest. Half an hour elapsed, however, before the procession which they expected appeared ; for the dust which they had seen, was raised merely by a large party of horse grenadiers and foot guards, sent out to meet the unfortunate prisoners from Preston and escort them into London.

After calling for something for the good of the house, Van Noost placed himself at

the window of the little sanded parlour with a number of other persons, while the road before him was occupied by a small crowd from Highgate and the neighbouring villages. At length, the advance of a large body of men along the road was descried ; and on they came at a slow pace, while a loyal shout of “ Long live King George, and down with the Pretender ! ” burst from the crowd without.

Poor Van Noost’s heart felt very big ; and, when he saw the whole indignity to which his poor friends had been subjected, it was too much for him. Noblemen and gentlemen of high and distinguished character, men of honour and refinement and unblemished reputation, were being marched into London with their arms pinioned with ropes, each of their horses led by one of the foot guards, often by a mere common halter, while a large party of cavalry preceded and followed but did not flank them, as if for the express purpose of exposing them fully to the gaze of the multitude.

Van Noost caught a momentary glance of many whom he knew, and especially of the Earl of Eskdale ; but he saw little of what passed after, except that Richard Newark ran forward, laid his hand upon Smeaton's knee, and spoke to him eagerly, walking by the side of his horse till one of the soldiers put him rudely back.

The poor statuary's eyes filled with tears ; and, retiring from the window, he made place for those who were struggling to get forward.

CHAPTER XV.

THE Tower, the Marshalsea, Newgate, and other London jails, were filled to overflowing. Prison regulations, which were few, and those not very strict, were all but entirely neglected ; and scenes of revelry and merriment, the most discordant with the place and all its associations, occurred in the cells of the captives. It was not alone that the Tory or High church party, waking from the apathy in which they had indulged as long as activity could have

been serviceable to the cause, now contributed large sums of money to make the fate of the captives as comfortable as a captive's fate can be ; it was not alone that the numerous friends and relations of the prisoners flocked to give them consolation and support of every kind ; but a revolution took place in that strange fickle thing, public opinion ; and many of those who, had not their rank and station stood in the way, would have gone out with the hooting mob to witness the entrance of the rebel prisoners into London, now began to regard them as martyrs and laud them as heroes. Crowds hurried to see them and to testify their sympathy. No one who could find or frame even a specious pretext for admission, was excluded ; all hours and seasons were forgotten ; and the gates of Newgate were often thrown open in the midst of the night, to admit a visitor, a servant, or a friend. The jailors declared that they were worn to death with the continual turning of the keys ; yet they did their work very

willingly—from no great feeling of compassion, perhaps but for the golden rewards which were sure to follow.

In the Tower, where the noblemen who had joined in the insurrection were confined, a greater degree of decency certainly prevailed ; but, even here, very great laxity existed ; and, from ten o'clock in the morning till the same hour at night, the doors were opened to almost any one who required admittance. In fact, the conduct of the authorities, from the day of the surrender at Preston till the termination of the whole tragedy, is perfectly unaccountable ; so capricious and strange were the alternations of lenity and severity. During the march to London, it often happened that, on one day, the prisoners of note would be confined in separate chambers, and not permitted to see or speak with any one, while, on the very next, they were allowed to wander about any towns they passed through, each under the charge of a soldier, visiting their friends or, purchasing whatever

articles they required in the shops. One day, they would be compelled to sleep upon damp stone floors, with none of the comforts or conveniences of life ; and the next, they would dine with the officers of their escort, faring sumptuously on all that the place could afford. At one time, the sick and the feeble were provided with coaches to carry them, with nothing but a trooper at the window ; and then, at Barnet, they were pinioned on their horses, and led into London like condemned felons. Thus, too, after their arrival at the place of their destination, they were allowed to live in luxury, and, alas ! in many cases in licentiousness, while all the time the terrible catastrophe was being prepared with stern, relentless determination.

In many instances, the prisoners themselves, at least those of thoughtful and high-toned character, were obliged to entreat their jailors to exclude the mixed multitude which flocked in to see them ; and even then they were often greatly annoyed ;

for the virtue of the turnkeys was not stout enough to resist the bribes which were frequently given for admission to the cells. The greater number, indeed, were well-pleased with the attentions they received, and laughed, joked, and drank with the strangers who presented themselves ; but it must be said that a general impression prevailed amongst them, that the facts of their having surrendered at discretion, and of their being spared for the time, would secure them from the penalties of treason. Many were even ignorant of the terms on which the surrender had been made, and thoroughly believed that a promise of pardon had been given ; and others felt quite confident that the exertions of influential friends would gain for them the lenity of a merciful sovereign.

But George the First was *not* merciful. Perhaps it would be too much to accuse him of a disposition naturally cruel ; but his heart was as hard as that of any man who ever lived ; and his conduct to the

young Countess of Nithsdale would prove the truth, even if it were not witnessed by many another act.

Amongst those who took the least cheering view of his situation, was Henry Earl of Eskdale, who flattered himself with no vain expectations. On entering the chamber assigned to him in the Tower, he looked round it as his last abode before he went to the scaffold ; and, although the small sum of money he had remaining was sufficient to procure him comforts for the time, he counted it over with care and assigned a certain portion for each day's wants, calculating, as well as he was able the time likely to elapse before his death.

The morning after his arrival, a number of persons were admitted to see him ; and at length he was glad to give the turnkey a guinea, as an inducement to exclude every one but those who could declare they were his personal friends.

“ I have much need of thought and reflection, my good sir,” he said ; “ but, if I

am to be troubled with strangers all day long, however kindly their visits may be meant, I shall have no time to prepare to defend my life, or to meet my death as becomes me."

"If your Lordship will give a list of those you wish to see," replied the man, "I will keep out all others."

Smeaton wrote down the names of the few whom he thought likely to visit him ; but he had some difficulty when he came to the dearest name of all. It was too sacred a name to be lightly spoken of ; and therefore, to meet all cases, he wrote down broadly : "Any one of the name of Newark, any one of the name of Eskdale ;" and then thinking of poor Van Noost, he added his name to the paper, saying, as he gave it to the man :

"If any one should urge strongly that he is a personal friend, let him send in his name ; and I will tell you whether to admit him or not."

The man had not even closed the door,

however, when Van Noost presented himself ; and his agitation on seeing his noble friend in captivity, had something in it both touching and grotesque. He wept like a child ; but the pathetic was greatly lessened by his attempts to conceal his emotion and speak through his tears. Smeaton treated him with great kindness, congratulated him upon his escape and his freedom, and listened patiently to his account of all he had undergone since they met. But he then turned the conversation to matters of deeper interest to himself, by enquiring if his visitor had seen Emmeline as he promised.

Van Noost almost started from his chair, exclaiming :

“ Good gracious ! I had nearly forgotten. I saw her this very morning, my Lord ; and she charged me with a message to say that she would be here this evening as soon as it grew dark, if you would permit it ; and, indeed, who would not permit it ? It seemed as if she thought the

time between this and night would never come to an end. I believe she would have run here at once, if the old lady, Madame Culpepper, had not dissuaded her."

Smeaton did not reply immediately ; for many contending feelings were busy in his bosom. To hold her once again to his heart ; to tell her how he had thought of her since they parted ; to learn, from her own lips, her views, her wishes, her feelings ; to consult with and to counsel her, were all motives which prompted him to say " Yes," without a moment's hesitation. But he feared risk, and embarrassment, and perhaps even misfortune, to her whom he loved better than himself. He knew not that she was accustomed to come daily to the Tower ; that her person was known to the warders and many of the officers of the prison ; and that she was always accompanied by sufficient men to protect her, as far as they were permitted to go. He thought of Emineline only as the simple, inexperienced girl of the Manor House in

Devonshire, timid even in her innocent boldness, utterly unlearned in the world and the world's ways. He knew not that she, as well as Richard, had been schooled in sorrow, and that her mind had put forth new powers, and her heart gained firmness, since they parted.

Can he be blamed, however, if he yielded, in some degree, to his own wishes ? He fancied that he considered all things fairly for her good, as well as for his own happiness ; but, perhaps, he was not altogether unbiased when he said,

“Tell her, Van Noost, that I ardently long to see her ; but yet I would not have her come, especially at night, unless she can do so in perfect safety, and in secrecy also ; for, till we have well considered the next step, I do not wish our marriage to be made public ; and I must have no spot rest upon her name, even for her love to me. If she can come safely, she knows what joy it will give me. If she can not, that joy would be dearly purchased by peril to

her. So tell her, Van Noost. Go, my dear friend, go ; and let her have my answer quickly."

"I will, my good Lord, I will," replied the statuary, fumbling in the wide pocket of his coat ; "but there is another matter I had well nigh forgot, too. Here is something I promised to deliver to your Lordship."

And, as he spoke, he produced a little packet—in shape very much like a schoolboy's ruler, wrapped up in paper, and sealed at both ends—which he laid upon the table.

"What is this, Van Noost ?" said the young nobleman, taking it up and surprised at its weight. "This is money, my good friend. I cannot accept of this."

"Indeed, my Lord, you must," responded Van Noost, "or make a great many people very unhappy. It is your share of a purse made up amongst the loyal and true hearts of London, for the support of all

the Preston prisoners, and for their aid in their imprisonment, their defence, or—" and he sunk his voice in a whisper—" or their escape. You have no more than your fair share ; and I doubt not that, in a few days, a very much larger sum may be raised, of which your portion will be brought to you also, either by me or by somebody else."

" Their escape !" said Smeaton thoughtfully. " Think you that escape is possible, Van Noost ?"

" Nothing more possible, my Lord," replied the statuary. " Why, never was such a scene known as there is now in the prisons. Money is abundant—all order is gone. The jailors think they do quite enough if they only lock the doors. They vie with each other in being corrupt ; and, if we could but raise a few thousand pounds to bribe the scoundrels, and we managed the thing properly, your lordship might walk out of these gates in open day, without officer, turnkey, or warder seeing

you. Such is the strange effect of a pair of gold spectacles."

"Would I could feel so certain," returned Smeaton. "The few thousand pounds you speak of, could soon be raised. A word in my dear mother's ear would speedily procure it, if she be still living; and, if not, I could procure it myself."

"Think you so, my lord, think you so?" said the statuary. "Would you but trust me so much as to write down merely the words, 'Believe what the bearer shall tell you on my account,' sign your name, and address it to the Dowager Countess? I see they allow you paper, pens, and ink."

"With all my heart, Van Noost," replied Smeaton. "I am quite sure you would rather injure yourself than me."

And he wrote down on a sheet of paper the words which had been required.

When he had sanded the paper and handing it to Van Noost, a sound

of bolts being drawn was heard at the door. The statuary hurriedly concealed what he had received ; and the next moment, Richard Newark came in. He advanced towards the Earl with a frank, bright, look, and shook him warmly by the hand. Then, turning to Van Noost, he said,

“ Ha ! idol maker ! Are you here ? Get you gone—get you gone to Emmeline, and stay with her till I come. The dear *gouvernante* has gone forth questing like a spaniel dog upon a pheasant, from a hint I gave her last night. Do not leave her for a minute ; and, if the man refuses you admittance, pull his nose boldly, and walk in. He is an arrant coward ; so you may venture safely.”

“ I will—I will, sir,” replied Van Noost. “ He shall not stop me on such an errand.”

“ If there be two of them,” continued Richard, “ knock down one. That will be enough for the other.”

Van Noost hurriedly took up his hat

and left the room ; and Richard Newark, taking Smeaton's hand in his, said, in a quieter tone than usual,

“ Come, Eskdale, sit down and talk to me. I must try and keep my poor whirling brain steady for a minute or two, while you tell me all and everything with regard to your transactions with Lord Stair. There is your only chance of safety. If you can show that you were driven into the insurrection against your own inclination by the conduct of others, as I know you were, a skilful lawyer tells me that you will certainly be pardoned. Now listen to what I know, then fill up the gaps, give me some proofs, and I will follow the scent as keenly as my bloodhound, Bellmouth. You sent a letter long before the outbreak to Lord Stair. That letter never reached him. It was stopped by my father. You went over to Mount Place, led to believe that you would see nobody but one old fool ; and you found twenty or thirty, young and old, assembled, on a hint from

my father, to meet you and trap you into treason. The Exeter people sent down dragoons, who sought you at Mount Place, and thence tracked you to Keanton ; for they had secret information from Ale Manor."

"But what could be your father's motive ?" asked Smeaton.

"Keanton, for the first : to get you out of the way of Emmeline, for the second," answered Richard. "But never mind motives. Let us deal with facts. You afterwards, in the north, sent your servant with a letter to Lord Stair, on receiving intelligence that he was on before us at Wooler. Now, Eskdale, I doubt that letter ever having been seen by him. Nay, I am quite sure it was not."

"Higham assured me," said the young Earl, "that it was put into his hand, that he opened it, read it, and returned it with contempt. What can make you think that he never saw it ?"

"Because Lord Stair was, on that very

day and hour, more than seven hundred miles from Wooler as the crow flies," replied Richard. " His regiment was there, true enough ; but *he* was in Paris. A man cannot be in two places at once, noble friend. But come, do not pause and wonder. This is all I know. Fill up, fill up ! Let me hear the whole ; and I will try if my wits are not worth something, in spite of all folks may say against them."

Smeaton did as he was bidden ; and, sitting down at the table with his young companion, he gave him a clear and complete narrative of everything that had occurred after his arrival at Ale Manor, and showed him the copies he had taken of his letters to Lord Stair. More than once, Richard asked him to stop for a moment, and wrote down the heads of what he had heard ; and then, looking at the letters, he said—

" May I take these with me to copy ? You shall have them to-morrow ; for you may need them. Strange, that a piece of

paper should sometimes be the best armour for a man's neck!"

"Take them, take them," replied Smeaton. "They are but unauthenticated copies, and could not be given in evidence, if Lord Stair has not received them. Yet I can hardly believe that Higham would play me such a trick."

"Where did you hire him?" asked Richard.

"He was recommended to me by the man in whose house I lodged," replied the young Earl: "a good, honest fellow, who had been a servant to the Earl of Oxford."

"Put about you by the Jacobites," replied Richard, with a laugh, "to keep you steady in the cause, and commit you to it if you wavered. The man must be found and made to tell the truth."

"I fear you will have to seek him in the grave," said Smeaton; "for he was sorely wounded at Preston, where he fought as boldly as a lion."

“Never mind,” replied Richard. “Some of these letters must have reached Lord Stair, I think ; and, if I get at him, I will jump upon his back, and never take my spurs from his side till we have passed the winning-post. Good bye, Eskdale, good bye. Your trial will not come on for a month, they say ; and you wont see me for a fortnight, perhaps ; but I'll be working all the time. Tell Emmeline to mind well every step she takes ; for the villain scoundrel, William Newark, alias Somerville, has made his peace with the court, pretends that he is the most loyal subject of King George, has betrayed all that he knew of Kenmure's and Forster's secrets, and is watching with all his eyes to pounce upon Emmeline. He cannot rightly make out where she is ; for I have puzzled him about it. But he thinks that if he could but get her into his hands, Ale Manor—which is hers, you know—would be his, and he would be a great man in his generation.—Once more, good bye, Eskdale ; and, if

you hear that I am drowned, shot, stabbed,
or otherwise disposed of, do not forget me.
Say to yourself—‘I was kind to the boy ;
and he loved me well.’”

Thus speaking, he hurried to the door,
and halloo’d to the turnkey to let him
out.

CHAPTER XVI.

I WILL not dwell upon the first interview between Emmeline and her husband ; I will not dwell upon many that took place, for many *did* take place between the time of his arrival as a prisoner in London and the day of his trial. There are sanctities in the deep emotions of the heart, the violation of which nothing but a holy cause can justify. I have no right to eat the shew-bread on the altar of their love. I have no right, be they real or be they ideal

real characters, to intrude into the secrets of their hearts, and place the thrilling nerves beneath a microscope for the public eye. Suffice to say it that they met often, daily, sometimes twice a day, by the skilful management of her who had been the young Earl's nurse; and that no annoyance or inconvenience happened to the young Countess of Eskdale during nearly a month, although some circumstances of suspicion—a number of strange men hovering about the house, and the appearance of others dogging them in their walk to the Tower—caused some apprehension in the mind of the old housekeeper, and induced her to redouble her precautions.

Emmeline had seen her cousin more than once. Kind, affectionate, self-devoted, he showed himself during their short and scanty interviews; but those interviews were not very many. Suddenly he disappeared, telling his fair cousin that he was about to visit Paris, but without mentioning the business on which he went; for,

although he was very sanguine in all things, he loved her too well to give her hopes which might be disappointed, or to shackle her exertions in other directions by expectations from the uncertain projects he had in view. She knew that he went for the purposes of her husband's defence, and she thanked him with her whole heart; but this was all she knew; and when he was gone, she felt anxious and eager for tidings which did not come.

Thus passed the days of a long imprisonment; but several steps had been gained, notwithstanding. The extreme laxity of those who had charge of the prisoners had become apparent; and Smeaton had established a certain sort of friendship with his jailors; but the principal fact was that they showed themselves accessible to bribes; so that the probability of escape was reasonably added to the probability of acquittal or of pardon. Nevertheless, with hope for their guide, they flattered themselves that the delay in bringing the prisoners to

trial arose from the intention of sparing them ; but they experienced a bitter disappointment in the end, when Smeaton and the rest were impeached of high treason by the House of Commons, and their trial came on with unusual rapidity.

As is well known, the greater part of the insurgent noblemen pleaded guilty. But Smeaton would not join in this plea. He acknowledged the whole share he had borne in the rebellion ; he entered into minute details of all that had occurred ; he showed, as well as he had the means of showing, that he was actually driven to join the insurgents ; but he could bring no proof of the fact. Richard was still absent, although he had promised to return in a fortnight ; and nothing had been heard of him when the trial took place. Smeaton's mere unsupported word had little weight with the peers ; but, while most of the others were, upon their own plea, condemned at once, a space of time was taken to consider and to allow for the collection of evidence before his trial.

The lawyers laboured hard to induce him to withdraw his plea of not guilty, and cast himself upon the royal mercy ; but, although his mind, till the insurrection had actually begun, had been in that doubtful and undecided state which is most painful to men of a determined and resolute character, yet, once having joined in it, either the prejudices of early education resumed their sway, or the enthusiasm of his companions infected his own mind ; and he could not bring himself to believe that there was guilt in supporting by arms the sovereign whom all his family had served, and whose claim to the throne of England they had never on any occasion renounced. He did not feel himself guilty ; and he would not plead guilty. It was a dishonouring word, a word that he would not have attached to any part of his conduct by his own act ; and he resolutely adhered to his former plea. He gave no unnecessary trouble, indeed ; he admitted all the facts as they stood charged against

him ; but he contended that his acts were loyal and not treasonable ; and it was only as an admission that he stated he had been willing to submit quietly to the existing state of things. To this, he added a detail of the transactions between himself and the Earl of Stair.

His defence was frequently interrupted ; for the English law often decrees that the evidence which would clearly exculpate any man from all moral blame, shall not be received in his justification. But he persevered in his course ; and the very men who condemned him felt for him, and hardly believed their own words when they pronounced him guilty.

It is a strange thing, that law of treason, which affixes the most odious moral censure upon acts heroically mistaken and sometimes sublimely just ; which compels men, by rigid rules and the admission of false premises, to pronounce that to be guilt which they know to be virtue ; which places the same stain upon the lowest and most

selfish crimes, and upon the most elevated and patriotic deeds. A great fault exists somewhere : it is true, order and respect for law must be maintained ; the will of the majority must rule ; it may be, even, that, for general security, men must be punished for bold attacks upon existing institutions ; but let us not be called upon to denounce as guilt, that which is mistake, or enthusiasm or virtue.

The dark scene was over ; the verdict was given, the sentence pronounced, the blade of the axe turned towards the prisoner ; and one more of the gallant and the true was carried back from the bar to the Tower, to await the fate of a traitor.

In the anticipation of that moment, Smeaton had often felt how terrible it would be : he had doubted his own courage, his own fortitude ; he had nerved his mind to resist all the impulses of his mortal nature, lest he should meanly and faint-heartedly supplicate for life, as others had done. He recollect ed that there were many endearing ties

around him ; that youth, and love, and hope, and high health, and all the bright amenities of being, attached him to the world in which he was ; that it was full of delight and enjoyment to one so constituted mentally and bodily ; and that the thought of parting with it in its hour of greatest excellence, might well shake his resolution and undermine his firmness. But when each peer had pronounced his judgment, and when the frightful and barbarous sentence was passed, it was marvellous, even to his own mind, how calmly he bore himself, how firm and composed he felt. It seemed for the moment as if the tremulous, vibrating, anxious cord between hope and fear was snapped, and that his feet were firmly fixed upon the rock of fate. Take away hope, and there is no such thing as fear.

During a short space of time all hope was over in his bosom. But, in the meanwhile, others were preparing hope for him ; and to two separate scenes we must turn,

where busy love was eagerly exerting itself, in different ways and without concert, to avert the blow from his head. I know not which to depict first ; for they both occurred on the same day and very nearly at the same hour ; but perhaps I had better choose the one which, from presenting few if any characters already brought under notice, may have the least interest for the reader.

Into a gorgeous room of a palace, containing a number of distinguished persons—some marked out to the eye by the splendour of their apparel, some by their beauty or their grace—entered a middle-aged man, small in stature, insignificant in appearance, and with his somewhat large head rendered more ridiculously conspicuous by a huge Ramillie's wig. He was dressed in tea-coloured velvet, with his sword by his side and his hat on ; and the door by which he entered was thrown open for him by one of the high noblemen of the Court ; while another, bearing a

light in either hand, walked backwards into the room before him. He was a very mean-looking person ; cold, unloveable in aspect, looking like a small dancing master in a holiday suit ; but yet he was a King.

At one side of the room, supporting herself by the back of a chair, stood a tall and queenly woman of some sixty years of age. Her natural hair, as white as snow, appeared slightly from beneath the weeds of widowhood ; and her striking and beautiful face—beautiful even in sorrow—was pale and worn with long and heavy sickness. The moment the king entered, she advanced towards him, with a step firm and dignified ; but she sank upon her knees as she came near, and stretched out her hands towards him, holding what appeared to be a petition.

“ Who are you, madam, who are you ? ” asked the King, in French.

“ I am the unhappy Countess of Eskdale, sire,” replied the lady, in the same language. “ I do beseech you, hear me, and receive my petition for my poor son.

Spare him, gracious monarch—spare him, and I pledge—”

She was not permitted to finish the sentence. The cold-hearted King drew back at her first words, and, with a sort of frightened and repulsive look, turned towards a different door from that by which he had entered. But the lady caught him by the skirt of his coat, pleading with all the earnestness of maternal love for her son's life, while he rudely endeavoured to shake himself free, walking with a quick step towards the other side of the room, and literally dragging her after him as she still kept her hold, endeavouring to force the petition upon him.

A gentleman with a cut upon his brow, who had entered with the monarch, now whispered in his ear in French :

“Be firm, sire! Be firm! Shall I remove her?”

The monarch made an eager motion of assent, and the other, casting his arms round Lady Eskdale, tore her away. The paper, which she held in her hand, dropped

to the ground ; and, instantly rising to her full height, as the monarch passed the door, she turned a look of dignified anger on him who had interposed to prevent the reception of her petition, and exclaimed aloud, in English—

“ Oh, William Newark, William Newark ! Ever ready, like the viper, to sting the hand that has fostered you, and to aid in all that is hard and selfish !”

“ Poor lady !” said the gentleman thus addressed, with a look of contemptuous pity ; and he followed the King. But there was another who followed also : a grave-looking man of the middle age, with a calm and placid countenance and a blue ribbon across his breast. With a quick but easy step, he hurried on and overtook King George just as he had crossed an ante-room and was about to enter a large drawing-room beyond—round which were grouped a great number of brilliant-looking people in a blaze of light. He ventured to stop the sovereign in his advance, saying something to him in a

very low tone in the Latin language ; for many of the first nobility of England, at that period, did not speak French or German, and the first George's stock of English was not very copious.

“ Who is he—who is he ?” asked the monarch, also speaking Latin, though not in its greatest purity. What does he want at this hour ?”

“ He bears despatches from Lord Stair, sire,” the nobleman answered who had spoken to him, “ and is charged to deliver them immediately into your Majesty’s own hands. He is the young gentleman whom your Majesty declared to be more praiseworthy, on account of his speedy repentance and atonement, than others who had never joined the rebellion.”

He spoke still in a low tone ; but the monarch replied, aloud, “ Admit him—admit him. He is a strange boy ; but whatever comes from my Lord Stair is worthy of immediate attention.”

“ The despatches were to be delivered in

private, sire," observed the other ; " but the bearer was detained for want of horses on the Dover road. Shall I—"

" So be it, so be it," replied the King. " Close the doors again. Make everybody quit the room but you and Walpole, my lord ; and then bring the young man in."

The personage to whom he spoke, proceeded to fulfil his commands ; and William Newark, in obedience to those commands, quitted the room with a scowling brow, which was not brightened by the passing of Richard Newark in the very doorway. He did not venture to say anything, however ; and the lad advanced with a small packet in his hand straight towards the King, without any other salutation than merely a low bow.

" Bend your knee, bend your knee," said the elderly nobleman, in a whisper ; and the lad, after a moment's hesitation, did as he was directed.

" I am glad to see you again, young

gentleman," said King George. " You have been to Paris, I suppose." And, at the same time, he took the packet and broke it open. It contained two sheets ; but, before he proceeded to examine either of them, the monarch added a question. " Do you know," he asked, " why Lord Stair happened to address me personally instead of the Secretary ?"

" Because the matter was for your Majesty's own ear," replied Richard Newark, somewhat abruptly. " We do not give an apple to one boy to hand it to another, for fear he should eat it himself."

The King laughed good-humouredly, and proceeded to read the first sheet, which, beginning at the bottom of the first page, and ending at the top of the fourth page, did not seem to contain much matter. Whatever that matter was, it seemed to give the King great satisfaction. " That is good ; that is very good," he said. " He is an invaluable man. We shall know how to

honour him. All is safe in that quarter." He then turned to the other sheet ; and his face instantly changed.

" Ha!" he said, with a curling lip, and an irritable eye. " More about this Lord Eskdale ! He joined the rebels wittingly, adhered to them till the last moment, was taken with arms in his hands ; and he must die. I have signed the warrant."

" Then kill me first, sir," rejoined Richard Newark, bluffly, " for I first helped to engage him in the rebellion ; and, had it not been for his advice, I should never have quitted it. He went against his own will, as your Majesty will see if you read ; and, if he dies, it will be as a bird that is caught in a trap because he was deceived by the baits set for him. Your Majesty cannot understand till you read, any more than I can see through that wall; for there is a great deal beyond your sight or mine, unless a door be opened for each of us to look through."

The King gazed at him for a moment in

utter surprise, as if completely astounded by the lad's impudence ; but gradually a sense of the justice of what he had heard seemed to overpower the slight sense of anger ; and, without answering a syllable, he turned his eyes to the paper, and proceeded to read it to the very end. When he had done so, the expression of his countenance was again greatly changed : a hesitating and embarrassed look came upon his face. He put his finger under his large wig, rubbed his temple, and pulled up one of his stockings, which had somewhat slipped down the leg, and most likely tickled his shin ; then, turning to another gentleman present, he said, "Come with me, Mr. Walpole—come with me, my Lord. I will go to my cabinet for a moment."

Thus saying, he took two steps towards the door by which he had entered, but then turned a sharp glance upon Richard Newark, who was standing by with a vacant air, looking down at the hilt of his sword.—It was the same sword which Smeaton had given to him.

The monarch's look was certainly not very placable at first ; but something seemed to touch the risible organs in his brain or heart—wherever they may lie ; and we all know that in those organs a great deal of the milk of human kindness is secreted. He laughed, low but gaily, and said—

“ Get away, sir, get away. Lord Stair has trusted his letters to a somewhat indiscreet messenger.”

“ The best in the world could not have done better, your Majesty,” replied Richard Newark, boldly ; “ for he has delivered them safely into the best hands in the realm.”

If he meant it, nothing could have been more dexterous than his reply. It was a compliment, slightly veiled under a rudeness. But I very much doubt whether he did mean it. However, King George smiled most graciously, saying :

“ Go, sir, go. We shall not forget you.”

Richard Newark bowed and retired, while the King again took a step or two towards the door.

Before he passed out of the room, however, the King turned to a gentleman with a florid countenance, saying :

“ We shall not meet that woman again, I hope ; for I have not quite made up my mind. Keep that man, Sir William Newark, from me. I do not like him as I did.”

So saying, and suffering Mr. Walpole and one of his attendants to precede him, he followed slowly and thoughtfully out of the room.

The adjoining chamber was by this time vacant ; the unhappy Lady Eskdale had quitted it the moment after she had received so violent a rebuff ; and the courtiers who had been present when she sought to force her petition upon the King, concluding that he had passed on into the drawing-room, had thronged thither by another way. But a full hour elapsed before the monarch joined his guests.

Now let us turn to the other scene which I have mentioned, in which strong affection was busily engaged for Smeaton's deliverance, but in a different manner. Let us break into the middle of it, however ; for what is to follow will explain what is passed.

"No, no, dearest lady," said old Mrs. Culpepper, in a low but eager tone. "It must not be. The boat is prepared, the ship ready to sail the moment his foot is on board. You must go with him ; and all will be safe."

"Then who is to stay and personate him in the prison ?" asked Emmeline. "Indeed it must be as I have said. Although you have bribed the people to shut their eyes, yet I do not believe they dare venture to let three people pass out when only two have passed in. In this I will have my way, indeed. I fear nothing. I do not believe there is any man so cruel as to punish a wife for saving her hnsband's life. I will wrap myself in his *roquelaure*, and

sit brooding over the fire. My heart may beat ; but no one will see it. My eyes may overflow ; but I will cover them with my hands. The first plan was the best—far the best ; and it is my bounden duty, as well as my earnest wish, to risk anything to myself for his sake.—Oh, Heaven ! what happiness will it be hereafter, even if they should shut me in a prison and never let me see his face again, to think that I have saved him !

“ It is the same plan still, dear lady,” replied Mrs. Culpepper, with her usual calm and quiet manner ; “ but you must not, cannot execute it in the way you propose. Consider your height, the difference between your tiny figure and his. They would be blind indeed to mistake you ; and we cannot expect them to be so blind as that. I am shorter than he is, but still I am very tall ; and the difference will not easily be seen. They will not mark very exactly, especially if he put his handkerchief to his face and seem to

weep. My clothes will nearly fit him too; and—”

“ And will you—will you stay in his place?” asked Emmeline, gazing in her face, with a look of wonder and gratitude. “ What will you say when they find you there? You have no such excuse as I have.”

“ I will say, lady,” replied the woman, earnestly, “ that he drank the milk from this breast as an infant; that he was to me as a child, when God had taken my own; that he was my nursling, my beloved, my only one, when I had lost all else on earth who loved me or whom I could love. Then, if they choose to shorten my days or make me pass them in a prison, it is but little they can take away and little they can inflict. It must be so indeed, Lady; and now we are only losing time. They will not let us pass in or out after eleven. It is now past nine, and it will take some time to disguise him as we wish. Haste then, to get on your hood. I am quite ready.

With this *sacque* above my other clothes, and a large French *capote*, everything is ready to hide his face and figure."

Emmeline looked down thoughtfully ; but she said nothing, for her heart was too full to speak ; and in a few minutes they set out upon their adventure, followed by two men servants, whom the old house-keeper had already prepared for the task in hand.

The moment they were gone, however, one of Sir John Newark's men, who had lived at Ale for several years, and who had been accustomed to act as one of his spies upon all that took place in the house, crept silently out and pursued them with a stealthy step down the little street. He saw them cross Tower Hill, and obtain admission at the gates ; and then turning to the right, he approached a house in a neighbouring street, hurrying his walk as much as he could without converting it into a run. At the moment he reached the door, one of the ordinary hackney coaches

of the day drew up ; and a gentleman in somewhat brilliant attire descended with a slow step. The man waited till he had paid the fare, and then plucked him by the sleeve, whispering something in his ear. The gloomy and discontented face of the other instantly cleared up ; and he exclaimed, with a mocking laugh—" Ha, ha ! Then they have put themselves in the trap. I will away to the Tower. You stay and watch at the gates. But no—better let them be caught in the very act, just when they fancy themselves secure. It will be more meritorious to bring him back after he has actually escaped than to prevent him from doing so. You are sure, quite sure ? It would never do to take an old raven instead of a young hawk."

"I am quite sure," replied the man ; "for I overheard it all, as I listened at the hole I have made in the wall. This morning, I could not make out which of the two it is who is to play his part ; but just now I heard ; and I am quite

certain. The old woman was his nurse, it seems, and is ready to sacrifice her life for him."

"Well, well, go to the gates and watch," rejoined William Newark. "Give instant information if they come forth. I will go and get a messenger. There is one lives hard by."

The servant did as the other bade him ; but he had not remained many minutes near the gates of the Tower when some quick steps approached ; and he turned round towards the new comers.

"Ha, ha, old Truepenny !" said Richard Newark, taking the man's arm in a firm grasp ; "what are you on the watch for here ?"

"Nothing, Master Richard," answered the man. "I am only just taking the air."

"You won't let your intentions take the air, at all events," retorted Richard Newark. "I know you, serviceable knave ! This is the fellow," he continued, turning to the two young men who accompanied him,

"this is the fellow who informed of the smuggled tea."

"Then I will baste him to a stock fish," cried one of the youths, brandishing his cudgel.

"No, no," interposed Richard, with a laugh. "Wait till you get him back at Ale, and then tar and feather him. Hasten off, Argus, or we will leave you no eyes to see out of."

The man had no hesitation in obeying ; and, as soon as the young gentleman had relaxed his grasp, ran across the open space as fast as his legs would carry him.

Richard Newark then turned towards the gates again ; but, taking three steps in advance, paused, and, after a moment's thought, with his hand pressed upon his brow, quietly glided away to a little distance, followed by the two lads.

CHAPTER XVII.

At the hour of half past ten, two persons issued forth from the room in the Tower in which the young Earl of Eskdale had been long confined. Both were dressed in female apparel ; both were apparently much affected ; and it appeared very natural that they should be so, as the following morning was appointed for the bloody spectacle of an execution on Tower Hill. The limbs of the younger and shorter lady trembled so much that they could hardly bear

her up ; but the other, though apparently weeping and holding a handkerchief to her eyes, seemed much more firm, and contrived to support the wavering steps of her companion as they passed out into the passage.

The jailer who opened the door to give them exit from the room, looked in and saw a tall figure wrapped in a red cloak laced with gold, seated by the fire, with the head leaning on the hand. "All is right," he cried, speaking to another man at the top of the stairs hard by. "Pass them out !"

Hastening onward through the passages and courts of the Tower, as fast as the agitation of the fair girl would permit, they came without obstruction to the outer gate, where the two men servants were waiting in the little gate-house. The turnkey who accompanied them seemed to be a kind-hearted man for one in such an office ; and, while the wicket was being opened, he said—"Don't take it so much

to heart, lady. Perhaps he may be pardoned after all."

One of the tall warders who stood near, gave him a grim, contemptuous look, and uttered a short, cruel laugh ; but the two visitors, without reply, passed unopposed through the wicket, and stood upon Tower Hill. The men servants followed ; and the gate was closed.

Still keeping profoundly silent, they all walked on with great speed, not towards the little street in which Emmeline had lived, but towards the end of another street. When they were half way across the open space, the latter of the two bent down, saying in a whisper—"Bear up, bear up, dear Emmeline. We are well nigh safe now."

But hardly were the words uttered, when two or three men came quickly across, and one of them caught hold of the apparently elder woman's arm, exclaiming, with a mocking laugh—" You are a tall lady, upon my soul, to walk upon Tower Hill of a

night ! Gadzooks, we must see more of your ladyship !”

Another man—who subsequently turned out to be a messenger sent in pursuit—at the same moment seized the young Earl (for I need hardly say it was he) with a hard, strong grasp, exclaiming—“Henry, Earl of Eskdale, I charge you, in the King’s name, to make no resistance.”

With a faint, despairing cry, Emmeline sank to the ground, while they dragged Smeaton away from her side. The two servants, running up, demanded—“Who are you who dare to stop these ladies ?” and angry words began to pass ; but Smeaton interposed, saying—“It is in vain, it is in vain. Look to your lady, my good men. Convey her home safely. God bless you, my Emmeline !”

“What is the matter, what is the matter here ?” cried Richard Newark, suddenly appearing with two or three more, while the man who had first seized upon Smeaton left him in the hands of the messenger, and raised Emmeline from the ground.

"Ah, Master Dick!" he exclaimed, "have *you* a finger in this pretty pie? Better put yourself out of harm's way, young man, as fast as possible."

"How dare you touch that lady, scoundrel?" demanded Richard, in a voice furious with passion, as he recognised the person of William Newark. "Take that for your pains!" And, holding the scabbard of his sword with his left hand, he struck his cousin a furious blow with the right.

William Newark started forward and drew his sword: Richard's was not long in the sheath: but the servants interposed, and parted them for the time, though not till words had been spoken—some in loud anger, some in the low tones of intense hate—which bore their fruit soon after. The last four of those words were uttered in a whisper.

"At seven, and alone," said Richard, in his cousin's ear.

The other nodded his head, and turned sullenly away, while Richard aided to

raise the unhappy girl, whose last hope had been extinguished by her husband's recapture, and carried her, still insensible, to her dwelling.

In the mean time, the messenger and two of his men conducted their prisoner back to the gates of the Tower with feelings in the bosom of Smeaton too dark, too painful, for description. To his own fate his mind had been long made up, and the extinction of a brief hope of escape added little to the load he had to bear ; but the thought of what might befall Emmeline in consequence of her effort to save him, and of the certain consequences to the devoted woman who had placed her liberty and even her life in peril for him, was too heavy to be borne with anything like calmness.

Arrived at the gates of the Tower, they found the wicket, to their surprise, open, and a good deal of confusion under the archway of the gate-house. Some twelve or fourteen men were collected ; a

buzz of tongues was going on ; and some loud and angry words were being spoken. The lieutenant-governor himself, in a silk dressing-gown, was present, with a man beside him, holding a lantern ; and just as the messenger passed the wicket, still holding the prisoner fast by the arm, they heard that officer exclaim—

“ Shut the gate, shut the gate ! Every one keep silence ! If you can be discreet, no harm may come of this. If not, some of your necks may pay for it.—Ha ! who have we here ?”

“ An escaped prisoner, Mr. Lieutenant,” answered the messenger, who was willing to take all possible credit to himself. “ I am sharp enough ; and I got information of this fine plot.”

The lieutenant-governor stared at him coldly, with no great appearance of satisfaction in his countenance.

“ Pray, Mr. Messenger,” he said, after a moment’s thought, “ had you any warrant for what you have done ?”

The man looked aghast at the question, but replied, in a somewhat insolent tone—

“I needed no warrant to apprehend a convicted traitor whom you have suffered one way or another to slip out of the Tower.”

The lieutenant still gazed at him with a frowning brow and teeth tight shut, and then said—

“ You may have to prove, Mr. Messenger, that you possess such a justification of your conduct. *I tell you, you have not.*”

Then turning to one of the warders, he said, in a sharp tone—

“ Shut the wicket, I say, and lock it. Let no one pass in or out till I return. Keep that man safe too,” he continued, pointing to the messenger, “and be perfectly silent with him. Let no one exchange a word with him, as you value the King’s favour.—My Lord of Eskdale, will you do me the honour of accompanying me back to your chamber? I wish to

speak a few words with you.—Let go his arm, sir, this instant!"

The messenger instantly relaxed his grasp ; and Smeaton, not less astonished than his captor, followed the lieutenant in silence back to the room where he had been confined. They found the door open ; but within stood the turnkey, looking gloomy enough, with his arms crossed upon his chest, and old Mrs. Culpepper, with the young Lord's *roquelaure* now cast off, seated in her usual attire before the fire. The moment she heard steps, however, she started up, and, gazing at Smeaton, clasped her hands together in silence, with a look of unutterable anguish.

" Remove her to my lodging," said the lieutenant, speaking to the turnkey, " and keep her there under your guard till I come."

The young Earl, however, started forward, and took her by the hand.

" Thanks, excellent woman!" he exclaimed, " a thousand thanks! I pray God, as one of

my last prayers, that he may defend you and my Emmeline, and shield you from all the ill consequences of this night."

Before she could reply—for her voice was choked with sobs—she was removed from the room ; and the lieutenant, carefully closing the door, said, with a faint and rueful smile—

" That dress does not become you, my Lord. Let me beg you to throw it off, for I hardly know whether I am speaking to the Earl of Eskdale or an old woman."

" That is easily done," replied Smeaton, casting off the loose garment called a *sacque*, which was, for three-quarters of a century, a favourite habiliment of the ladies of France and England. " Now, sir, I am your prisoner again. I beseech you to leave me, for the last few hours of my life, to the thoughts which befit the occasion ; and, if it be possible, to conceal the events which have taken place, so as to shield that excellent creature and all others from the consequences."

"This is a very awkward affair, my Lord," observed the lieutenant, thoughtfully; "and, upon my life, I do not well know what is to be done. Will your Lordship answer me this one question on your honour? Were any of the jailers—I do not wish you to specify the individual—were any of the jailers accessory to your escape?"

"Not in the least, to the best of my knowledge and belief," replied Lord Eskdale. "They have had from me the ordinary gratuities and nothing more; nor am I aware of their having connived in the least. They were deceived, as you yourself, perhaps, might have been by the disguise."

"I thank your Lordship for that assurance," said the lieutenant; "for it sets my mind greatly at ease; but yet I hardly know how to act."

"Methinks, if you were simply to report that I had endeavoured to escape, and had been prevented, that would be all that your duty requires."

"I do not know that," replied the lieutenant. "It is true, I never yet heard of a pardon being revoked ; but certain it is, that an attempt to break prison—"

"A pardon!" exclaimed Smeaton, with his heart beating more vehemently than it would have done at the sight of the block and axe. "What do you mean, sir?"

"I mean, my Lord, exactly what I say," replied the lieutenant-governor. "Just at the time when your Lordship must have been preparing to effect your escape, the Secretary of State's messenger brought me a letter, authorising me to announce to you His Majesty's free pardon, and to say that, though it will not pass the seal till to-morrow, you may consider yourself from this moment at liberty. How the events of this night may be construed, and what I ought to do in these circumstances, I really cannot tell. As a man of honour, my Lord, what ought I to do?"

In a state of terrible agitation, Smeaton

walked twice up and down the room ; and then, turning to the lieutenant, he said—

“ No consideration, sir, shall make me ask you to neglect your imperative duty. You must inform the King, however terrible the state of suspense must be to me, and however perilous may be the result. I could wish it, indeed, done immediately ; but at this hour of the night—”

“ My Lord, you are, indeed, a noble man,” replied the lieutenant ; “ and I do not think you will lose by your conduct. I had retired to bed, somewhat unwell, before the messenger arrived. He insisted upon my being awakened ; and some delay consequently, occurred. Otherwise, the pardon would have been announced to you before you made this attempt. When I came to your room with the information, as I was commanded, I found you gone. But I will tell you what I will do. His Majesty is still up, for there is a court to-night ;

and I will immediately set out and lay before him or the Secretary of State the facts as they are. Stay! Perhaps it may be better for you to write to the King yourself ; and I will be your messenger. It is absolutely needful this step should be taken at once. You have writing materials here. Pray, write as briefly possible, while I put myself in a different dress to present myself at the palace."

Thus saying, he left him ; and Smeaton proceeded, with a rapid hand, to write as follows :—

SIRE,

"Your Majesty's gracious clemency has been this moment announced to me ; and I beg to lay humbly the expression of my gratitude before you. I know not anything but your own merciful consideration which can have induced you to spare me, though I assure you, on my honour, that

the facts which I stated without proof at my trial, regarding the causes which, if I may use the term, had driven me or misled me to take arms, were strictly true. Let me also assure you that, henceforth, neither directly nor indirectly, will I ever be found opposing your title to a crown which I am now thoroughly convinced you hold by the will of a great majority of the people, if you still condescend to extend your mercy towards me. But at the same time, I feel it right you should be informed that, at the very moment your gracious pardon was notified at the Tower, I was engaged, without the participation of any one within these walls, in an attempt to effect my escape from prison, fully believing that in its success lay my only chance for life. That attempt was frustrated ; and I will not even endeavour to persuade the royal officers of the Tower to conceal the facts from you, but willingly leave my life at the disposition of a monarch who has already shown himself

more merciful towards me than I could have expected."

He had hardly concluded when the lieutenant returned ; and, in a few minutes, the young nobleman was left once more alone, to wait with painful anxiety for the result.

But in the meanwhile, we must follow the lieutenant to the palace. The Secretary of State was called out to speak with him ; and, after a brief conference, returned to the court. An hour passed, and a few minutes more, while the lieutenant remained in an ante-room, waiting the King's pleasure. At length, the sound of many people passing out was heard, with the roll of carriages ; and a page entering, bade the officer follow him to the King's closet. Unable to speak either French or Latin, he could simply lay the Earl of Eskdale's letter before the King, and trust to the secretary to translate it accurately, and give any farther explanation. When the monarch had

heard the whole, however, he laughed good-humouredly, saying—

“Escape! Of course he did try to escape. What could a gentleman in his situation do better? No, no: our sign-manual is to the pardon. It only wants the seal; and we will not revoke it. We could not revoke a pardon, gentlemen. Severity may be re-considered—mercy never. Besides, it is clear from the evidence of Lord Stair, and from that of Colonel Churchill, who took Thomas Higham’s dying deposition, that this young nobleman had no will to the work they put him upon; that he was at heart our own, notwithstanding the prejudices of his family; and that the machinations of this Sir John Newark, and others, abused a somewhat rash and hasty disposition. Something must be done with that same knight. I fear we cannot touch him for treason; but as to seditious practices, there must be some law which will affect him.”

"I am not sure, Sire," replied Mr. Stanhope, one of the secretaries of state, "that this gentleman's acts do not amount to treason. His letter to the Earl of Mar is undoubtedly treasonable."

"Well, well, see to it, see to it," said the King. "As to this young lord, let the pardon pass. He may be set free at once."

"His Majesty says he will not revoke the pardon, Mr. Lieutenant," said the Secretary. "You may set Lord Eskdale at liberty. But I think it would be better if he were to pass some time in France."

The lieutenant of the Tower bowed and withdrew. Much to his satisfaction, few questions had been asked ; and, returning to the Tower as fast as a pair of slow horses would draw him, he entered once more that abode of gloom and sorrow. He found the messenger who had seized Smeaton on Tower Hill, still in the gate-house, and ordered his liberation, saying—

" You have somewhat exceeded your duty, sir ; but it was in ignorance. I find, that the Earl of Eskdale's pardon was already signed. I have no orders with regard to you. So you may go free ; but you had better be cautious."

He then proceeded straight to the room of his former prisoner, bearing him the joyful tidings that his pardon was confirmed.

" As to this old lady," he said, " who chose to personate a young gentleman, nothing whatever has been said with regard to her ; and therefore I suppose I must take upon myself the responsibility of letting her go, having no warrant to detain her. With regard to yourself, my lord, you can either remain here for the night, or depart if you please. But I must not fail to inform you that Mr. Secretary Stanhope hinted it might be better for you to pass some time quietly in France. Will you pass out to-night or to-morrow ?"

"To-night, assuredly," replied the young Earl. "I would fain bear the comfortable tidings myself to those whose hearts are now full of mourning, and first to that good old woman who has risked so much for me."

"Come with me, then," said the lieutenant.

In about half an hour, Smeaton, holding his good old nurse by the hand, passed free through the gates of the Tower, with one of the governor's servants carrying his little stock of baggage after them.

They took their way straight towards the street in which Emmeline's abode had been fixed ; and, though it was now nearly three o'clock in the morning, lights were still to be seen through the crevices of the shutters. It was with no slight anxiety that Smeaton waited for the opening of the door ; and it seemed long before it was unfastened. At length, however, one of the men who had accompanied the Lady

Emmeline that night to the Tower, appeared with a light, and uttered an exclamation of joyful surprise when he saw the faces of those who had just knocked.

“Hush!” said Smeaton, in a low voice.
“How is your lady?”

“Oh, my lord, she will be well enough now,” replied the man.

“Hark!” said Richard Newark, from the little parlour. “Hark! Emmeline, look up. I told you so. There is hope—there is comfort still.” And, as he spoke, he threw open the door.

Emmeline had been sitting with her fair face, deluged in tears, covered by her hands; but, at her young cousin’s words, she looked up—started forward—and in an instant was in her husband’s arms.

I need not pause upon all the explanations that were given. I need not tell the joy that was felt; and, indeed, as to the farther events of that night, it is only ne-

cessary to say that, after hearing but a very small portion of Smeaton's story, Richard Newark left the lovers to their own happiness.

On the following morning, about eight o'clock, a note, written in a crabbed, boy-like hand, was given to the Earl of Eskdale, who opened it hastily and read these words :—

“ NOBLE FRIEND,

“ I am going to try, this morning, whether you are a good fencing master, and whether the blade you gave me is worth handling. Should I not join you and dear Emmy by eight o'clock, you will hear something of me in Mary-le-Bone fields. God bless you both for a pair of loving turtles. If you don't see him again, think, from time to time, of

‘ POOR DICK.’

Emmeline had not yet risen ; and Smeaton, calling some of the servants hastily together, set out with terrible feelings of apprehension, for the spot which the note had indicated, and which, I may remark, was notorious at the time for the number of duels which it witnessed. Calling some people, who were better acquainted with the locality than themselves, to their aid, they searched the fields, which then extended where now stands Baker Street and the adjacent masses of houses, for some time without success ; but, at length, they came upon the body of a man lying on his back, with his sword still clutched in his grasp, an old scar on his brow, and a sword-wound right through his chest. Life had evidently been extinct for some time ; and Smeaton, who knew him well, bestowed little thought upon him.

Near the spot where he lay, which was one pool of gore, the ground was again dabbled with blood ; and, tracking the drops which marked the frosty grass for nearly three

hundred yards, they came to a place where, under some tall trees, and with his back leaning against one of them, sat Richard Newark near a stile which he had apparently attempted, in vain, to reach. His face was ashy pale, and his hand rested languidly against the tree ; but he still held a handkerchief, sopped in blood, to his right side, as if to staunch the bleeding of a severe wound. He could not speak nor even lift his head at first ; but Smeaton, while one of the men ran off for a surgeon and some restoratives, unbuttoned his waistcoat, and with remarkable skill soon contrived to stop the current which was draining away his life. He recovered a little in a few minutes ; and, after the arrival of the surgeon, who immediately gave him some of the essences then in vogue, looked up, with a light smile, in his friend's face, saying, " Ha, ha, Eskdale ! I have paid our friend all debts ; but that which vexed the scoundrel most, was that he should be killed by the

hand of a boy, as he called me. How he did curse when he was dying ! Well, you may set up for a fencing master when all other trades fail, though he did whip me his point over the arm, because I did not turn my wrist quick enough, as you taught me."

The surgeon insisted upon his keeping silence ; and a door, taken off the hinges, being obtained, he was placed upon it and carried away to the nearest house where lodgings could be procured. There the wound he had received was more fully examined, and proved to be in reality of no very dangerous character, except from the great loss of blood it had occasioned. Before evening, he was better and stronger ; and the sight of Emmeline and her husband by his bed-side seemed to revive and cheer him greatly. But as the tidings of another fatal duel in Mary-le-bone fields began to spread, inquiries and investigations were set on foot which, it was evident, could not long be baffled. The fact of the duel hav-

ing taken place without seconds or witnesses, rendered the youth's situation rather perilous ; and a long consultation took place that night between the Earl of Eskdale and the surgeon.

On the following morning early, a ship in the Thames, bound for Dunkirk, received some five or six persons on board, and set sail immediately. Amongst them was Richard Newark, who was carried into the vessel on a mattress. There was also the young and beautiful Countess of Eskdale, somewhat pale and anxious of look, who sat upon the deck as they dropped down the river, with her hand resting on that of a tall, dignified lady, advanced in life and habited in deep mourning. The rest of the party consisted of Smeaton, two men servants, the good old woman who had played such a conspicuous part in the events which have been narrated, and a maid servant.

There can be no doubt that the government at that time connived at the escape

of many persons from the rigour of the law; and certain it is that the vessel I have mentioned was suffered to set sail without any obstruction. The passage was smooth and easy; and the whole party landed safely on the shores of France.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE darker scenes of the early part of the reign of George I. had passed away ; and, though there were troubles and contentions in many parts of Europe, and conspiracies and designs against the existing government in England, general tranquillity reigned in this island, and prosperity and happiness were following fast upon the steps of peace.

But I must lead the reader away from England to a small village in France, some eight or nine miles from the capital : a sufficient distance to retain all its

rustic quietness, and yet near enough to allow the intelligence of the great world to penetrate before it had grown very stale. At the distance of half a mile from this village, was placed a small French chateau, built in a little trim park on a rising ground. The chateau had nothing remarkable about it : it was just like all other chateaus at the same period ; a congregation of oddly shaped masses of building, with several little round towers, having conical slated roofs, like candles with extinguishers on their tops. It had a sunny and pleasant aspect, however, and an avenue of fine old walnut trees ran up to it from the high road.

In a small room in this chateau, very quietly furnished, sat a group of people, with some of whom the reader is already acquainted, enjoying a pleasant dessert of wild strawberries and light Burgundy wine. Perfect contentment was upon all their countenances, and harmony in all their hearts. One young man, indeed, was pale and grave, though serene in aspect.

But I must begin with those of whom the reader as yet knows little. They consisted of two elderly people and one young lady. The first was a fine dignified man, somewhat beyond the middle age, with hair very grey, but with eyes still bright and keen. The second was a lady younger, but not by many years; and, though they were both advanced in life, as I have said, they continued to call each other by the names of early affection.

Passing from one part of the chain of life to another very distant, we must notice that bright-looking curly-headed boy, little more than two years old, seated on the knee of that very beautiful girl whom he calls "mother," in the good old Saxon tongue. It is Emmeline's boy; and I need not say who is that gentleman by her side. An old lady close by, now a little bowed with age, is the Dowager Countess of Eskdale.

But who are the two whom I have mentioned as rather beyond middle life? Emmeline calls them "father, mother;"

and looks at them with love none the less because she was so long bereaved of their fostering care. The pale young man in a military dress, with signs of mourning, too, in his apparel, is Richard Newark ; and that fat, round, rosy-pippin personage—Heaven ! what a crowd of leaden figures rush upon the imagination as one looks at him !

“ It is strange, Dick,” said Lord Eskdale, “ that you and good Van Noost should have arrived here this morning after we have not met for so long a time ! Do you know, Emmeline,” he continued, turning to his wife, “ that this is the anniversary of the day on which I first set eyes on that dear face ?”

“ Do you think I can ever forget it, Henry ?” she answered. “ It is the first of my days of brightness. It is like a sweet song remembered in a happy dream.”

“ And how can I ever thank you, my dear Lord,” continued her husband, addressing her father, “ for giving me that

commission to seek and regain for you your daughter, which has ended in bestowing such happiness on myself?"

"There are two things, my dear Harry, for which many sage friends have blamed me," replied Lord Newark, "which I can never regret, and of the wisdom of which even those who blamed me are now convinced: the one, my having trusted a young man, whom I knew to be the soul of real honor, with so delicate a task; the other, my having set at nought all ideas of imaginary dignity, and, as a merchant, having secured to my family that competence which I had lost by doing my duty as a soldier. I am proud of both these acts; and both have ended in happiness. Had my poor boys but lived to see this day, there would be little in the past even to bring one cloud of melancholy over my setting sun."

Richard Newark looked up in his face as he spoke, and asked—

"Would you never regret, my good

Lord and cousin, having lost in the cause of a bad prince those fair lands in Devonshire, to which I am sure, if you feel like me, you must cling even in memory?"

"Not a whit, Dick," replied the old nobleman. "The favours of fortune, or, as some would call them better, the gifts of God, are loans, my dear boy, to be resumed when it is His pleasure ; and—"

"Then I have borrowed them long enough," interrupted Richard Newark, in his abrupt way ; "and it is high time they should be restored."

"No, no, Dick," said Lord Newark. "They are yours since your father's death. I have nought to do with them, and could not enjoy them even if you gave them up."

"They are not mine at all," replied the young man, "never have been mine, never have been my father's."

"But the forfeiture, the forfeiture !" exclaimed Lord Newark. "If they are not yours, whose are they ?"

“ Emmeline’s,” replied her cousin. “ The forfeiture extended not to her. They were settled by deed upon your dear lady and her children, male and female, two years before the forfeiture. You lost them by drawing the sword against King William. She lost them, and your sons lost them, by accompanying you in the war and in your flight. You four are specially named in the act of attainder ; and the lands fell to her at once as the next heir. The cunning lawyers, I believe, outwitted themselves by making the black and white parchment so particular ; but the original act, always preserved by my father, was found by Van Noost when he went down to patch up an old monument in Aleton church, by putting a leaden hand on a stone figure. I was always sure there was something of the kind, or my father would not have kept such a sharp watch upon Emmy. He was not a man to keep pet birds in a cage for the sole purpose of feeding them and hearing them sing. God

rest his soul ! He did it all for me ; and so I must say no more."

Lord Eskdale looked to Emmeline, with a thoughtful enquiring glance ; and she read his meaning in an instant.

" I will not take them, Dick," she said. " I cannot, will not, take them from you. Am I not right, Henry ?"

" But you must, sweet lady," replied Richard. " With what is left, I have enough, and more than enough ; so that you do not make me pay back all that has been unjustly taken. The lands were conveyed to my father by gift of the crown, saving the appearance of any nearer heir not named in the act of forfeiture. The lands are yours therefore, and ever have been yours. I will have nothing to do with them. I tell you, dear cousin, I have enough, and far more than enough, for a single man."

" But you may marry, Richard," said Emmeline. " You are very young to make vows of celibacy."

" Never, never, Emmy," he said. " I



will not transmit to others an infirmity." And he laid his finger significantly upon his forehead.

A moment of grave silence succeeded ; and then, looking at her father, Emmeline, said—

"Would that I could give them back to you, my father!"

"There is nothing to prevent you, Emmy," said Richard Newark. "Lord Stair tells me that your father can hop over the sea and perch upon Ale at once, if he will but promise to live peaceably under the government that exists. In a word, the attainer can be reversed in a moment upon such a promise. His not having joined in the last affair, where we all burnt our fingers more or less, has won him high favour."

Lord Newark bent down his head upon his hand, and fell into deep thought.

"But come, let us talk of other things," said Richard Newark, after pausing for an instant. "Business is dull work ; and that

is settled. There is only one thing you must promise me, Eskdale and Emmeline. When you are Lord and Lady of Ale Manor, you must let me have my little room up two pair of stairs when I come to see you ; and old Mrs. Culpepper, when she is housekeeper again, must not make the maids throw what she used to call my rubbish into the fire."

Emmeline held out her hand to him kindly ; and her husband assured him that he should be as free as air in any house of his.

"I have already made free with this house, at all events," replied Richard Newark ; "for I have asked Colonel Churchill to come down here to-morrow. He wants much to see you again, Eskdale ; and, I can tell you, you owe him something more than a dinner and a bottle of wine."

"He was exceedingly courteous to me when I was a prisoner," said the young Earl ; "and I shall be very happy to see him."

"Ay, but you owe him more than that,"
answered Richard Newark.

"Let me tell him, let me tell him," cried Van Noost, who had sat marvellously silent after the allusion to the leaden hand upon the stone figure. "Let me tell him; for I first ferreted out the facts, and got Colonel Churchill to write them down for my Lord Stair. After he had received your surrender at Preston, my noble Lord, he went to visit that rascal, Tom Higham, on his death-bed, and from his own lips, heard that the fellow had deceived you; that, bribed to lead you on into the rebellion, he had given your letter into the hands of the Colonel of Lord Stair's regiment, who tore it open, read it, and sent it back, bidding him tell you that Lord Stair was in Paris, and that if you would send a messenger to him, doubtless everything would be explained, as that noble Lord had never failed in his word: not one syllable of which the rascal told you."

"Heaven forgive him!" said Smeaton.
"He did much harm."

The conversation proceeded in the same tone. But enough of it has been given for all the purposes of this book. Were I to paint another scene, it would be that of Christmas eve at Ale Manor House, where, round the wide fire-place of the great hall, might be seen the faces of the same persons as were seated round the table of that small *chateau*.

But the story is long enough ; and the reader's fancy must supply the rest.

THE END.

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